

# THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL;

A WEEKLY RECORD OF PAINTING, SCULPTURE, ARCHITECTURE, MUSIC, THE DRAMA, AND POLITE LITERATURE.

"IS IT NOT RATHER NOTORIOUS AMONG THE BEST JUDGES OF ART IN THIS COUNTRY THAT IF YOU WANT AN ABSURD OPINION ON THE MERITS OF AN EXHIBITION, YOU MUST GO TO A NEWSPAPER TO FIND IT."—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON ART UNIONS.

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## TO OUR READERS.

"ANOTHER Periodical!—New!—Pshaw!—What can it have to tell us, that has not been, and is not, daily—hourly—told us, ten times over by others? What quality can it pretend to, that has not been already exhausted (in pretension) by the crowd of other pretenders that already lumber the side table? Is not what is called "The Liberty of the Press," "The Bulwark of British Freedom," "The Safeguard of Civilization," "The Champion of Progress," &c., &c., &c., becoming a still greater pest than any of the hundred thousand pests, to the extermination of which it would assert its energies to have been consecrated? Good sir, or madame—Patience for a moment. "Hear us, for our cause; and be silent, that you may hear." We do intend to tell you something that is never told you by any other, but as an accident. We are not sure you will like it. There may occur, indeed, occasions when we are sure you will not like it. Those will be, when your own works, or your own opinions, may be subjected to our observations, and we may be so unfortunate as to differ from you in their estimation.

What we bind ourselves to tell is—TRUTH! Do not mistake us: we have no intention to inquire into private anecdote, for even truth would be to us no warranty for exposing to publicity that with which publicity has nothing to do. The truth we publish shall be confined to just, or, at least, conscientious strictures on all those various matters that seek, in publicity, for encouragement or recompense.

To ensure this honesty in act, as well as in intention, we are prepared, at all times, to accompany our praise or blame, with such sufficiency of detail, as shall enable our readers, themselves, to test the good faith of our judgments, if not to guarantee their equity; and we doubt not to evince the possession of so much fitness for the task as shall, without assuming infallibility for our dictum, in the present state of artistic, dramatic, and light literature criticism, render *The Fine Arts' Journal* a work of

necessary reference to such as would measure their own opinions by the real and avowed perceptions of those who have made the thing in discussion a matter of long and severe inquiry.

If, in this scrupulous adherence to truth, we may be thought occasionally severe, let it be remembered, that the consequence of deficiency in the qualities of either truth or judgment, or both, on the part of our critics, has made severity a necessity. The imperfection of not knowing, or the crime of not saying, what is right, has placed, from the mere influence of puff and falsehood, many individuals in positions they are unworthy to occupy. But remorse for the mischief inflicted on such pretenders, when deposed, is many times balanced by the satisfaction of having inducted the true prince to the throne lately occupied by the false usurper. We indulge, however, the hope of having more to do with praise than blame; for we rather incline to the satisfaction of pointing out beauties than to the discomfort of giving prominence to defects. We have no party feeling. We look to art but in its abstract quality of a production, and shall judge of it only in its individual relationship to excellence. We will have nothing to do with schools, but as a term for classifying mannerism; and we declare exterminating warfare against conventionality, whether on the stage, in the closet, or in the studio.

With reference to the arts of design, we are prepared to maintain the high claims to excellence of British painting, against the common-place reproaches of the admirers of foreign mannerism. We shall labour to indicate the causes of individual failure, and expose the means by which amateur estimators of artistic accomplishment have been dazzled into extacies by mere singularity. We are independent of academies, have nought to do with associations, and our veneration for commissions is to an extent *bien borné*. We acknowledge no other purpose than that of proclaiming excellence, whether by early discovery of merit in new exhibitions, or the true appreciation of the productions of those who have already achieved prominence of position. However we may desire to see perfection in a work of art, we do not expect to find it anywhere. It has never yet shown itself among man's creations, and we have small hope that it ever will. Faults are therefore easy of discovery, while beauty is more modest in its advances; and we do not believe the critic exhibits his acumen so advantageously when pointing out the insufficiency of parts, as when daring to assert the degree of accomplishment in the work before him. Every degree presents details for carpers to find fault with; but it exacts knowledge of the principles on which the thing has been produced to measure its success, when a great name does not guarantee the precision of the estimate.

Our dramatic notices shall be such as must command attention, for responsibility shall, in no

instance, be evaded by generalities. Praise or condemnation shall ever be accompanied by such "answers" to the "why?" as may enable all to estimate its justness. A knowledge of the stage and an observation of its celebrities for a very long period, accompanied by extensive acquaintance with theatrical matters, metropolitan and provincial, will assist our endeavour to expose the causes to which the present degraded state of the drama is owing, and to denounce their continuation and recurrence. Our endeavour shall be constant for rescuing dramatic personation from the oligarchy of accidental advantage, by asserting the existence of talent, however controlled in its development by the refusal of opportunity. In doing this, our strictures shall not be confined to the scene itself, but shall be extended to expose the absurdity of ignorant, and the knavery of corrupted criticism, as being the real fosterers of decline and powerful incentives to retrogression.

We shall look to music as to an art not entirely sensual: as something capable of imparting mental enjoyment; and, in its vocal department, as fulfilling its mission, unless when sense and sound mutually assist each other. In the great schism that has revolutionised her Majesty's Italian Theatre, we are unattached to either of the belligerents; and may look at the circumstance and its suits as watchers for the public advantage, without reference to the pecuniary consequences to either party. We, in the name of that public, cannot perceive a reason why the wholesome correction of competition may not be applied to Italian Operatic enterprise as well as any other, and are confident that the result to the cause of the drama, whether lyrical or Thespian, must be beneficial.

*The Fine Arts' Journal* being independent of any individual publisher or set of publishers, will include fair estimates and illustrative extracts of all such works as its editors may consider to be immediately or remotely connected with the range of subject to which its pages are devoted; and its conductors will be moved to research by the desire of obtaining, from unsuspected sources, analogy and usefulness for the student, to whom devotion to his particular art may refuse the opportunity of extensive inquiry.

It may be, that an occasional paper on some general topic, in which our readers may be supposed to take an interest, will find a place in the pages of this Journal. The well-being of the artist is so amalgamated with that of the people he is among, that when the great machine goes wrong, he is one of the first to suffer. We shall not invent topics of this description, for we can hope to flourish most while the nation is least subjected to excitement, either from foreign broil or domestic grievance.

The Editors, in their endeavour towards the accomplishment of the purposes here detailed, assume to themselves no dogmatic notion of entire

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exemption from error in their judgments. There is too much in art, that is still a matter for deep and extensive examination, to allow those imbued with respect for its intricacies so to assume. They, therefore, unreservedly, offer the use of their pages to those prepared to dispute the opinions produced in them, only restricting that offer to what may be advantageous to the interest of the general subscribers without any reference to parental infatuation for their own offspring.

We may sum up what we have stated as follows:—*The Fine Arts' Journal* is an attempt at a record of information, discussion of topics, and notice of productions in which it would be a reproach to a pretender to the polite civilisation of our period, not to have an interest. They have, therefore, confidence that the high intentions of the work will receive assistance and favour from the public at large, for it is to that source alone it has dependence for immediate encouragement and permanent support.

#### COLOUR AND ITS CORRUPTION IN PAINTING.

We have met somewhere with the following aphorism, and we believe the assertion it contains to be irrefragable:—"There never was, nor never will be a painter who does not colour well for any other reason but that he is not able." Receiving this proposition as an axiom in art, it may be yet with many a matter for inquiry as to what are the essential attributes of good colour in a picture; for there is not a little of variety in the breadth of meaning attached by different individuals to the term. We do not merely allude to the mysticism generally enveloping periodical criticism, in which this uncertainty is but in common with its strictures on every other department of artistic production, and arises, in most instances, from the absence of distinct comprehension in the writer imposing a paradox upon himself. We would rather refer to a general looseness of diction that defies exactitude in those that know; and, as a consequence, endeavour to dispel some popular prejudices that owe their source to the absence of that exactitude.

There is not, perhaps, a more decided example of affectation among critics than that show of condemning colour as a leading quality in a painting. There are those among them who believe themselves to be distinguished as connoisseurs by proclaiming their contempt for colour as a meretricious ornament—as a degradation of art from the grand to the pretty—and as a sort of clap-trap for catching the applause of the uneducated. They would, forsooth, assume it to be an evidence of vulgar innocence in those who permit themselves to be gratified by its blandishments, and absolutely take pains to denaturalise their perceptions that they may be thought select.

To such as consider colour of inferior consequence in a work of art, we would remark that the painter in whom the quality is deficient exhibits proofs of such deficiency by positive errors. Those, therefore, who do not consider it necessary that there shall be faults in a painting, must wish that he who executes the work should be able to do every part of it well; and a knowledge of colour must to them seem an absolute essential in a painter.

Here the opposers of colour, as a leading quality in a picture, will, it is likely, be desirous of contracting their line of battle, and of limiting their

attack to what is termed brilliancy by its defenders, and, perhaps, gaudiness by themselves. They will pompously assert what has been so often asserted—that excellence in colour would have deteriorated the Roman and Florentine schools, and that it is unnecessary, and even injurious, in what is called high art, or severe historical and scriptural painting. But to maintain that good colour, the best colour, would injure such subjects, is to insist that they should not be coloured at all. Either they have a style that will admit of natural imitation, or they have some other standard to them appropriate: and he who would maintain that fine and true flesh painting is inappropriate to a historical picture, must go farther, and say what model is to be nature's substitute. If the carnations are not desirable in as much completeness as art can bestow, the objector is responsible to showing the point at which to stop. If nature is assumed to interfere mischievously with sentiment, he has to prove why some other model or intention is not equally mischievous. But to affirm that, in a picture, the human countenance is less capable of conveying sentiment when most like a human countenance is to assert that the human countenance itself is incapable of expressing the sentiment the painter has imagined, such an assertion being a self-evident absurdity either in the painter or the critic. Truth, therefore, in the carnations, that does not too much individualise the subject, or rather that does not change its individuality by the substitution of characteristics not belonging to it, cannot possibly injure the sentiment of the whole, provided the effect is obtained upon the principle of appropriateness, and the controlment of the agreeable to the allowance permitted by the gravity of the composition.

This quality of appropriateness is the grand test of knowledge in this department of the painter's art. Appropriateness is never either deficiency or excess. It is not because brilliancy is of no consequence to the subject that the quality of colour ceases to be a desideratum in a picture. A certain character of colour will, at all times, assist the sentiment, while another character of colour will at all times injure it. There is equally a demand upon the artist's knowledge of principle that cannot be substituted by inattention, as to a thing of little moment.

Refinement and erudition in colour does not exhibit itself in brilliancy but appropriateness, and includes the power of being brilliant when brilliancy is appropriate. Rant in the actor is when the sentiment to be expressed does not excuse the noise; but loudness is not rant when the sentiment excuses it. The same distinction applies to brilliancy and gaudiness.

It is a fashion among the would-be profound to rail at those who make the ornamental an intention in their art. But ornament is the object of painting in our period. The days of monkish superstition have passed away, and pictures may no longer be painted with the determination of being offensive. Many of the monstrosities of the Spanish school were executed with the intention of affrighting the people into penitence. They were part of the mighty machinery of the priesthood, and were admirably adapted for the end proposed. But subjects of that class present no quality for modern art to vie with. There was no orthodox department in painting, but inventions for a certain purpose, the execution of which must be judged in reference to that purpose. The painters were colourists in the true sense of the term, but the

intention was not to be agreeable, and they used their knowledge to be repulsive. Their success was as signal as that of Rubens, Watteau, or Greuze, for they differ in effect, but because they differed in proposed sentiment. The capacity of each was sufficient for the intention of each.

By gaudiness we will assume vivacity in colour is meant; for, as colour has its grammar as well as music, and a mass, a dirge, and a comic opera, though differing in gravity and levity, must be grammatically correct. Vivacity of colour is neither good or bad colour from its single quality of attempt at liveliness. Its intention is not its harm. Thus the term gaudy can only apply to vivacity of colour when the picture is or ought to be of that grave character in which vivacity of colour is a fault.

Thus we allow that gaudiness is a fault. But why? Because it is inappropriate. When appropriate it is not gaudy. Then what is appropriate? Here is a demand that can only be replied to by one that colours upon principle. Carelessness will not do, for if certain effects are positively wrong, certain other effects are positively right, and all effects between the two differ but in degree. The best colourist, then, is he who is most successful in producing that degree of appropriateness which can only be discoverable by reasons having established principles for their base, or by that naturally possessed perception of fitness which makes the truth to some self-evident, which for others requires demonstration.

But tameness or monotony in colour is also equally a fault when inappropriate; and we are prepared to maintain that it is a much greater fault than even gaudiness, inasmuch as it is in some sort a sacrifice of the ornamental—itself the object and essence of art.

What evil attaches itself to ornament that it should be classed among the meretricious? In itself, its largest meaning is that which is pleasant to contemplate. In its highest acceptance, as regards a picture, that it should not merely produce an agreeable combination with the meaner decorations of the apartment in which it may be hung, but that it should present such a character of design and execution as will satisfy the discerning visitor, and ornament and exemplify the intellect, capability, and acquirements of its owner. To do this, while fine colour is an absolute requisite in a painting, and its very first quality is agreeableness as a whole, that agreeableness may not be produced by substituting the quality of colour for any other desirable quality there absent, and made absent with the intention of being so substituted.

It is when so sacrificing other qualities, that colour may be termed a corruption of art; and it is only by attainment of the most extraordinary effects that such corruption may be tolerated. It never can be justified—it never can be the orthodox path for progress to the young student. If the attempt at such effects begins early—if the young painter has acquired facility in the harmonious combination of hues before his knowledge of form and *chiaro oscuro* may have insisted upon their share in the consideration of his work—it is but too likely that he will affect to be indifferent to excellencies, for the execution of which he is so little prepared.

The subject-matter of a picture, as shown in design and shadow, may be considered to resemble the words of a poem, and the colour the music to which it is sung, or the character of declamation to which it is recited. There is no man that has heard his own composition read by a bad reader



that is not cognizant how much it may be injured by such means; and all will agree that an actor of genius gives vividness and increased value to his text beyond the author's own imaginings. A poem may also be rendered more effective by being set to appropriate music; but if that music is not well sung the labour of the composer is as nothing.

What, then, is the agreeing essential quality of the colourist, the actor, the composer, and the singer? That must be the best which is most proper for the intention, therefore the agreeing quality is appropriateness.

But the painter's intention must be the production of works pleasant to look upon; from him is demanded a quality to which the actor and composer are not necessarily bound—that of being agreeable. The actor's effort is to excite. People go to a theatre to laugh—to shed tears—to undergo a series of the passions. They hate, and fear, and hope, and must be anxious, to be pleased. It is a triumph to a tragic actor when a portion of his audience is in hysterics. But this is not a perpetual ordeal; men are not subjected to it at all times and at all seasons. They do not breakfast, dine, and sup under exposure to these sensations, for they would then be inflictions. They go when they please, and are excited by the actor while excitement is an enjoyment, and no longer. They submit themselves to be electrified for the time, but not for always. Many feel next day a depression from the effect of the last night's tragedy. We have ourselves been uncomfortable after Miss O'Neill's "Belvidera." We are more hardened now; but still there are tragedies that leave impressions of sadness on the mind that it is unpleasant to refresh by repetition.

But, as we have said, these inflictions are not continuous: while a purchased picture that is suggestive of unpleasant cogitation—one that brings sad thoughts when you look at it, and is always before you, making bad blood and bile and melancholy, no matter how well it may be painted, it is unpleasant to contemplate and [an] affectation to approve. Artists who have devoted much time to painting such subjects have put off the epoch of their popularity. Herberts rather affected such productions in the beginning, and he is not yet appreciated to his deservings. One of his early engraved pictures was a young Venetian girl descending a flight of steps to meet her lover, full of joy and forethought of gratified hope. At the foot of those steps, but not yet within her range of vision, lays the dead body of her suitor, his face glueing itself in his own blood to the pavement of the court; the guitar, which told her he was there, lying mute by his side, and the assassin escaping in the distance. Here was a picture full of romantic interest, satisfactorily drawn, and telling its story well; so well that few or none would purchase the print. They would not hang up the representation of a murder in their apartments. The thoughts encouraged by its contemplation were unpleasant. It was exceedingly attractive in the shop windows; but few desired to have it continually before them. Dealers in pictures know well that an agreeable subject is far more saleable, though of middling quality as a work of art, than one of a higher class of execution, when the sentiment of the composition is repulsive.

Allowing, then, that a leading quality in a work of art is that it shall be agreeable, and that its highest ornament is dominated by appropriateness, the colourist *par excellence* is he whose resources

enable him to adopt his style to the intention of his subject. He who possesses such acquaintance with his material as to know beforehand, and see in his mind's eye, the effect of the painted picture, and so control his combinations that they shall not injure but assist the approved impression suggested by the composition in cartoon. This is the power of adding to the agreeable without sacrificing the sentiment; for solemnity in tone is not necessarily meagreness or monotony.

To assert that profound knowledge in colour is unnecessary for a certain class of art is nonsense. Where colour is at all used it must be either beneficial or mischievous. That which in deficiency produces mischief must produce degree in excellence proportionate with the increased amount of accomplishment, and a picture ill-coloured ranks beneath a black and white cartoon, in the same way that poetry is better plainly and distinctly read than badly sung.

Allowing that, as in music, dissonances are permitted to jar the nerves for effect, in painting unpleasing intervals in colour may be used for the same purpose; it does not follow that such license may be left to chance; for perfect appropriateness and preparation of such dissonances demands equality of knowledge with that required for compositions in which mere colour was the goal of attempt in the painter.

What we wish to make apparent is, that intention in colour, whether of a sober or a gay effect, must equally require knowledge of principles in the painter—that his erudition cannot be used but to the advantage of a picture, and to add some excellence to the work—that there is no danger of such excellence being too excellent, and that inappropriateness is always to be estimated as the fault of ignorance, whether erring on the side of dullness or vivacity. Thus, then, to abstain from good colour upon principle is nothing else than a deliberate determination to substitute bad in its place.

Many may suppose that close approximation to natural hue makes a colourist. This is true to a point; for such success is only consequent to full perception of character in hue, and full knowledge in quality of material employed. But, allowing close imitation of the object to be the quality requisite for detail, it is not sufficient for the production of the picture as a whole. Employed without entire knowledge of the range of combination, exactitude in local hue can scarce be hoped, and that knowledge of range is the first essential for the colourist; the acquirement without which all intention must resolve itself into failure. There must be an imagining of effect, a foresight of consequence to the juxtaposition of colour, light, texture, and circumstance that gives resemblance to truth rather than truth itself—a dreamed of concatenation that gives consistency to fiction, and creates an ideal atmosphere by which the whole is lighted, and to which the various hues own their combined allegiance.

A mere fancy for obtaining brilliancy from strong opposition is not proof of good colour, for appropriateness is still the test of principle. He who affects brilliancy must select subjects in which brilliancy is an excellence, and show, by avoidance of repetition, that he is not dominated by manner or confined in choice by restriction in perception.

The colouring of flesh presents so many difficulties to an artist, that he is too apt to suppose a certain amount of cleverness in that particular excuses him from an attempt at accomplishing any-

thing else tolerably. He looks upon an approach to the natural hue in the carnations as sufficient to replace attention to all other characteristics, and assumes that if the mode is pure and true, the drapery in contact with it may be false and careless; a mere blot and accident in handling, providing it is subservient as a tint.

But this is only complying with a portion of the essentials of good colour. Equality in painting of all parts makes consistency as a whole; anything less is but a delegation to a portion of the quality of form of the attributes of form itself. It is a substitution of falsehood in representation, as if it were useful that one part should be a lie to make the rest appear more true by comparison.

It is not unusual to call those painters colourists who have the habit of sacrificing everything to the quality of the flesh; but it is scarcely a praise to say of an artist that "he blotted that drapery for an effect that would not have existed had the drapery been well painted. It is not nature—it is not truth—but it is brilliant." Such means are not orthodox. They imply avoidance of difficulties rather than their conquest, like a child skipping a hard word. Sufficient judgment in selection—sufficient attention to consistency in tone, and exact harmony in hue, will afford all opportunities for richness, brilliancy, and every other exigency of a picture without the sacrifice of texture, than which there are few things more necessary in a painting.

We do not mean that exceeding finish that requires very near examination to fully appreciate, but we would indicate that equality of treatment that will not allow a part to assume too much of preponderance over the rest. The flesh should never owe any of its advantages to the bad painting of the other parts; for however successful that, the drapery would be a sort of queen's evidence to contradict its truth rather than a support for it as a foil. While artists go on painting heads and hands with effort, and leaving the draperies to the chance of the pencil and its flow of colour, without imitation, study, or attempt at manipulation, pictures, more particularly portraits, will not make an uncontradicted fame for their producers.

That point may be termed the corruption of colour where it is made to predominate to the expulsion of excellence in other desirable qualities. This is, however, often more the inevitable consequence of manner in painting than the choice of the artist. It is caused by the system of manipulation. To get brilliancy in the greatest possible amount, some paint for brilliancy only, leaving the other qualities of drawing and expression to the accidental effects of combinations, difficult, if not impossible, to be foreseen in their mode of handling. It would be next to miraculous for one of our most distinguished colourists to obtain truth of expression in a countenance when such peculiarity of expression was, in his intention, at the commencement. Indeed, it would be impossible for him to name his pictures effectively until they were finished. Expression, if any chances, is an accident suggested during the work, and adapted afterwards with very trifling means in his power for adding to its fitness. Any attempt at consequential change would be but the determination of taking the chance of a new accident. A picture by this artist might be better the first day than ever after. A sketch might be spoilt in an attempt to finish it, for every new process is a beginning again. To this may be attributed much of the incorrectness observable in his drawing; for, as he could not alter a portion

without interfering with the rest, something happy might be sacrificed, and he would rather leave it as it is. But such successes have more in them of good luck than of results that may be repeated and explained. They are hardly within the pale of legitimate art, and are more of gambling in colour than that orthodox execution that should make a school.

We have another colourist whose works have nothing to do with accident, whose every touch has meaning, and who progresses by slow but determined pencil to produce the effect of his intention at the commencement. With him, the more time he devotes to the painting the more excellent is the work; but the process is slow, and large pictures can scarcely be expected from it.

It may be asserted, in spite of critical affectation, that a knowledge of the value of colour is, in all cases, an absolute requisite in a painter, and that no evidence is so sequential of profundity in that knowledge as appropriateness. It is that which may at will be grave or gay, without at any time overstepping the bounds of the agreeable. It is that which shuts the door on mannerisms, and rescues colour from the stigmatic epithet of meretricious ornament, that would dazzle the eye without appealing to the intellect.

Thus, we arrive at the conclusion, that calling a painter a great colourist, because he indulges in contrasts or delights in gaiety of hue is bestowing the title unworthily; for if these characteristics are protruded on all occasions and in every variety of subject, we may suppose rather a mere habit of using particular colours than the possession of that judgment that would enable him to make appropriateness his director. The extremes of opposition that the range of excellence as colourists will include are those who would be desirous of as much vivacity of hue as appropriateness may permit, and those who would confine themselves to the least possible contrast within the bounds of the agreeable. Let one side be inappropriate or the other unpleasant, and they will have equally sinned against principle, and destroyed a quality essential to a good picture.

H. C. M.

#### MUSICAL PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS.

THERE has of late years been a great increase in the quantity of musical entertainment afforded to the public, and the appetite seems to increase in equal proportion to the means given of satisfying it, nor is this to be wondered at, for the long period of peace throughout Europe has necessarily produced if not a greater desire for increase of knowledge in artistic matter at all events, a more anxious wish for the greater enjoyment of art. The peace then may be considered the starting point—wars and rumours of wars, in the earlier part of the century, were apt to engross a more than usual share of attention. Their pomp and circumstance were almost forced upon each individual; compulsorily brought home to his door. A soldier, a man must be, even though an involuntary volunteer. In this state of things, whatever any individual artist may have done to advance the art, would be confined in its influence, the attention of the great mass being divided with other and more engrossing matters.

Since the peace then, for that must now be our dating point, great changes have been slowly, but surely, working their way in this country; the human mind has been so actively impinged upon, as to have caused it to start off at a tangent, and a wider range is now encircled within its powerful

grasp; there are no longer any limits by which it can be fettered, the age of mechanical science has brought forth working wonders, which are, as yet, but in their infancy, notwithstanding the astonishing results which have already been produced, the very prediction, indeed, of which a few short years ago would have been almost considered sufficient to institute a "de lunatico inquirendo" on the unfortunate individual who propounded them as in any way probable; but another result has also been the consequence, for, as in the case of all astonishing processes, after a time the mind seeks repose when the first excitement has passed, so here the great mechanical powers, lately developed, have somewhat ceased their exciting qualities, and the Fine Arts now conveniently step in to relieve it, to awaken new sentiments and kindle fresh energies, and give a different bias in which something more than mere utility is embraced.

Another cause also may be said to contribute to this impulse; the Continent, hitherto a sealed book, has now been opened, and its contents have been devoured by an anxious and expecting crowd, who have flocked to the fountains whence they could draw their knowledge. And artists of other countries have found their way across the channel, and tended, by their presence, to increase the impetus already given. The musical art has no doubt been much benefited by this change; in the early part of this century, it was but little cultivated. A very moderate amount of practical knowledge in an amateur was considered a great acquisition, and even the generality of artists were not much acquainted with the grammar of the art—for the science of harmony was but little studied. But now every one, who has at all the means at command, contrives to pick up a smattering, and the greater general knowledge has compelled a more regular system of study to be adopted. Much of this advance may be owing to the establishment of an academy, which, under royal patronage, has, from a small beginning, latterly produced a respectable amount of talent. This establishment was first commenced in 1823, eight years after our dating point—the peace; and was thus one of its first fruits, and, strange to say, most of the directors were among those who had taken an active and prominent part in the warlike events of the preceding period, each of whom first "ad arma quam ad artes paravit," have now been demured by the muses, and have cast aside the sword of Mars for the lyre of Apollo. From this institution not only are the singers and instrumentalists for the theatres in a great measure supplied, but a larger body still have settled in the country towns, carrying with them the fruits of a good musical education, which they have thus disseminated through their several localities. The re-action of this is now beginning to be felt in the metropolis, so that a still further demand will give more encouragement, and, what is more to the purpose, compel a greater amount of knowledge than has been as yet considered sufficient.

It is only within the last few years that an English opera establishment has been enabled to make it stand; that is, in which a theatre has gone through a season with English operas alone; we have had revivals and translations, but now Drury Lane is devoted entirely to novelties, and though the amount of talent in the composers may not be very considerable, still it shows the onward progress we are making as a musical nation, that a whole establishment is kept up solely for the representation of English operas. Till lately, the

musical entertainment was, in general, of secondary consideration; the style belonging more to the melo-drama, than what is now considered the regular Opera standard—in which, of course, music forms the principal part as contrasted with the former style, when it was more a play, with a ballad or duet occasionally introduced. Not that we intend to disparage these musical entertainments, for much of the writing was indisputably very pleasing, and, in the simple style, might vie with anything that we have lately heard.

In looking, also, at instrumental performance, there has been a great stride in this department, more almost than in any other. To establish this fact we need only refer to the progress of the Philharmonic Society. Those symphonies which are now, as far as regards the notes, unerringly played at the present day, were, at the first commencement, hardly even attempted, or if attempted, were pronounced unintelligible, simply because they could not play them, and were then thrown aside. It is also true that the orchestras at all the theatres are wonderfully improved, and that even at minor theatres works are produced, not perhaps in first rate style, but still amounting to a very creditable performance. The establishment of the promenade concerts has also not a little tended to diffuse more generally a taste for the art, and consequently a more general appreciation of the beauties it possesses. Very elaborate works are now listened to with more marked attention than even a dance tune would command at first. In short, the public mind seems to aim at more refinement in its enjoyment, and the charms of well-played music forms a very pleasing adjunct to the ordinary resources of amusement.

Almost every instrument has received an impetus by the wonderful mastery obtained by some individual. The powers of a Paganini have produced an excitement and an emulation that has called forth almost superhuman performance on that most difficult instrument, the violin. To Thalberg the pianoforte is indebted for opening up as it were fresh resources; combinations of notes, that almost seem impossible to be even attempted are executed with an apparent facility which adds to the charm, while at the same time it creates astonishment by the effects produced. Almost every other instrument has also felt the progress; even the apparently untractable have succumbed to the individual exertions. The double bass, under the powerful grasp of a Dragonetti, could be made to emit sounds as soft as that of a violin; and even the trombone and ophicleide—this last, an entirely new creation can be made to discourse most eloquent music in the hands of a Schroeder or a Prosperi. Nay the very art itself, in the composers hands, has received such additions as to have created an almost new era; if in all respects not equal to some of the master minds of former periods, still the names of Beethoven, Spohr, and Rossini, will prove to posterity that what the present generation has received from its ancestors has not passed on without some indications of the onward progress of the art.

Having thus shown the growing indications of the musical art during the past, we find in looking forward that the future prospects are of a most flattering kind. Drury-lane has opened with much éclat, and the programme for the season, by the promise of three or four new operas, shows at least the manager's intention of not relaxing in his efforts. The Princess Theatre has also opened with a new creation by an English



composer, and possesses some valuable acquisitions among its operatic company. But the great attraction for the coming season is the fact that we are to have two Italian Operas. Whatever the causes that brought this about we will not stop to inquire into. It is sufficiently understood that every arrangement has been completed for the Covent-garden company. The great array of names who are here engaged may well make the manager of the Haymarket concern tremble. His band has left him almost in a body. The principal singers have nearly all been transferred, and almost every artist of note on the continent who could be secured, has been added to the strength of the company. It remains to be seen whether our great metropolis can support two Italian operas. The prestige of long habit and fashion, together with the advantage of a better house, are all in favour of the old place. But Covent Garden has also a host of influential supporters. As our views are entirely liberal, we hope both may answer; for, by opposition and competition, the public are in general the gainers, and so we wish it may be the case in this instance. We subjoin a list of the engagements of the Covent Garden company, and also the sayings and doings in general, as far as we have been able to learn them:—Prime Donne—Mesdames Grisi, Persiani, Ronconi, and Steffanoni. Contralto—Signora Alboni; this lady has the reputation of being the most celebrated contralto existing. Tenori—Signors Mario, Salvi Leiva. Baritoni—Signors Tamburini, Ronconi, Del Porto. Basse Cantante—Signor Marini (this will be his first appearance in London.) This singer has a great continental reputation. Basso Comico—Signor Rovere; as a comic singer he is said to be equal to any of the day, the Lablache not even excepted. We hope so, for the elder Lablache has latterly somewhat sunk the comic character into that of a buffoon. Besides these, other engagements are now pending. For the old place, Mr. Lumley has also been active; he has, we believe, secured Fischek, Gardoni, and Madame Tadolini. The first is already well known and appreciated according to his merits in this country. The second was tenor at the Opera Française in Paris, but has seceded and joined the Lumley troop. The lady was an excellent singer, we hope she yet continues so; but it is many years since we heard her. Mademoiselle Jenny Lind is also spoken of; and, although Mr. Bunn has announced his determination to take advantage of his prior engagement in the event of her coming to this country, yet we have no doubt but that a little managerial diplomacy will remove all difficulties. Such is an outline of the expectations for the ensuing season in the operatic line.

The Philharmonic will, no doubt, come out with renewed strength; the success of the last season, under the able direction of Signor Costa, having added considerably to the fundamental resources—that is, the resources of the funds—there can, therefore, be no reason to expect other than a brilliant season. Some alterations, it is understood, may take place in the orchestra, which will add to its efficiency.

We have thus shadowed forth a few of the good things that are to be, and the prospect is satisfactory, not only to those generally interested in musical matters, but more especially to us as chroniclers of the events; and it shall be our endeavour, in every possible way, to render a strict and impartial account of the rich musical feast in store.

C. J.

## AMATEUR ACTING.

THE first difficulty to be overcome in an attempt to accomplish the full execution of any art, for success in which high reputation or great pecuniary recompense is the result, is the acquirement of a sufficient estimate of the amount of effort necessary for its attainment. Set down a pupil for the first time before a cast of the Apollo Belvidere, and he will produce ten detestable failures, while the true artist is patiently proceeding with his single imitation. The one would do in the beginning what increased knowledge would have informed him is an impossibility to do at all—produce sufficiency of result without sufficiency of attention to the means.

This absence of respect for the difficulties in their path, is the great stumbling-block in the way of success to amateur acting, rather than the supposed universal incapacity among those who make an enjoyment and a pursuit of what is called private theatricals. The first requisite, and that, perhaps, least attended to, is a distinct delivery and careful pronunciation. Indeed there are many actors on the public stage who possess no other dramatic quality, and may even be accused of having this one to such an excess, as to present a monotonous mannerism at entire variance with the natural exigencies of dramatic personation. Mr. Ryder, for instance, always excites in us the idea of a speaking machine.

The absolute necessity of distinct utterance will be at once conceded, on recollection that many poetic passages are too difficult for the immediate comprehension of the uneducated portion of an audience; and that such portion is much the largest on all occasions. The sentiments of listeners cannot be carried with the actor unless they are perfectly cognizant of the words uttered; for they may not, as when reading, turn back the leaf for a re-consideration of the difficulty. There is therefore a necessity for the utterance being less rapid than is natural for colloquial discourse, and this, even in comedy, unless where a characteristic exception is intended. We believe the distinction between Mr. B. Gregory, and the generality of amateur performers, is confined almost entirely to this quality of slow, distinct utterance; and is an advantage obtained, most probably, from previous drill as a provincial actor. In this instance, as in all other cases where the distinction is single, it is carried to excess, even to the adding of syllables to words—

"See to my house, left in the fearful charge  
Of an unwholesome knave; and presently  
I will be with you."

is carrying distinctness a trifle beyond the mark, and is, in fact, its corruption.

The mere reading of Shakspeare with some approach to propriety of utterance, is an accomplishment more rare, even among the educated, than they are themselves aware of as a class.

A distinct and correct pronunciation is, we say, the absolute requisite for an actor that amateurs should take great pains to acquire, for, without that pains, they may be assured they will never possess it. But it is impossible to exhibit this quality on a stage, and before an audience, even when it has been acquired in all its amplitude in private, until the actor can stand firmly on his legs, "the observed of all observers," and feel confident of doing his conceived thought. There may exist some iron-nerved individuals competent to such a test of their organization; but we never met a specimen, and, if such an one were produced,

would scarce receive the proof of his confidence to undertake as evidence of his capacity to execute.

The effect of this *mauvaise honte* of the stage is to unnerve the body and mind of the actor; his execution is undetermined, and his action hesitates; he seems to sneak about the scene; his voice falters, and, whatever position he may attempt to assume, it is, at all times, incomplete, and but an indication, rather than an accomplishment, of what he intended. Nay, he is fortunate if his recollection does not leave him, and he comes to a sudden halt in his performance. This is what every actor has felt at some time or other, and what amateurs scarcely ever overcome. Indeed, many actors cannot completely put aside this obstacle to the full development of their conception, and almost all of them on certain occasions are subject to its partial influence. It is scarcely possible to arrive at a true estimate of the mental value of Mr. Otway's personations. He, even now, after meeting the public so frequently, presents all the symptoms of trepidation that characterises the amateur performer.

We would not here be understood to ridicule attempt on the private stage. Our opinions are in direct opposition to the common-place slight that is attached by common-place people to so superiorly mental a pursuit, whether considered as a profession or as an amusement. Indeed, we do not believe an adequate appreciation of the difficulties an actor has to vanquish may be acquired in any other way than that of a personal lute with them by the critic. People gravely assemble, evening after evening, to undergo the infliction of indifferent singing and worse music, in neither of which performances are the intellectual faculties tasked to any effort; yet would they pronounce this higher quality of attempt, that of illustrating the immortal compositions of the poet of all time and of all nations, as not worthy the attention of reasonable beings. It is the consciousness that this prejudice pervades the average of society that unnerves the tyro, and amateur acting is, as a consequence, but a stolen indulgence, not generally acknowledged without a little of shame-facedness, even on the part of the most determined of its supporters. Much of the stigma that has been attached to this pursuit proceeds from the effect of the money-getting principle that is the universal alloy of modern opinion, and individuals are supposed weak to do for nothing those things for which others are remunerated. Singing, from being used in churches among the moderns, and having always been popular, even among savages, has escaped such imputation. We, however, believe it may be partly owing to the too light estimate of the difficulties which deteriorates the degree of success that is generally obtained by the amateur; and we would devote some portion of this work to the enumeration of those difficulties, and to describing the means by which they may be overcome.

The first thing the amateur will discover, in most instances (indeed in almost all, where elocution has not made an efficient portion of previous school education, and when it has, is a rare exception), that the speaking sufficiently loud and distinct produces errors in pronunciation that had been overlooked in his colloquial utterance. He will find that the greater quantity of air taken into the lungs to obtain increased power in delivery, causes it to intrude themselves where they should not be; and here and there they explode, as it were, in spite of him. His attention is thus attracted from the sentiment of his performance to a watch-

ing of words. We remember hearing a young man commence his first recitation thus:—

"See you swift harrow, how it cuts the hair!"

which caused an explosion of merriment among his auditory fatal to farther progress at that time. The more intensity the tyro employs in his acting the more is he liable to these errors. They are very prevalent among provincial actors, and may occasionally be detected on the metropolitan boards.

Insisting, as we do, that distinct articulation is an absolute essential to an actor, we would warn our readers against such excess of attention to this particular as may change the actor to an elocutionist; to a mere pronouncer of words. We believe it is the sin of the stage in tragedy at the present period. Words are getting to conceal and overpower the sentiment they should express, and pompous diction and extreme gesticulation do much injury to natural, refined, and impassioned personation. The syllabic utterance of words often muffles their sense rather than aids in its development; and we look in vain for that delicate colouring of passages that was wont to extract applause from an audience that it was only aware of after it was bestowed. We have now many second-rate actors on our stage, whose only use is to make a back-ground, that shall serve as a foil to the principal. The drama will not revive from its present lethargy until the principal actor shall make his own prominence with his own material, without dependance on the deficiency of those by which he is surrounded. In a continuation of this subject, we shall refer to the means of obtaining distinct articulation, and to those faults of which the reciter should suspect himself

THE TRUNKMAKER.

#### ARCHITECTURE.

THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL.—ARCHITECTURE.—A journal of the Fine Arts.—A journal of Architecture.—*Architecture a Fine Art!* (Thus did we soliloquise, and thought we never should have done.) *Architecture a Fine Art!*

For we had read the last *Builder*. And it had told us so plainly, pointedly, immutably for ever and for aye, what Architecture is,—"*the art and science of building*"—"the art and science of building according to certain rules and laws,"—it had laid us down so fixedly and flat this fact, as the *coup de complete* and final settlement for all heresy and schism,—that we had jotted down in our memorandum-book. "*N. B. Architecture = Building,*" and thought we should have no more bother about it.

But it happened that our fancy would not let us off thus easily. We could not but think over it. To dispute the *dictum* of *The Builder* was perfectly out of the question, of course. We didn't dispute it: but got it by heart—"Architecture is the art and science of building."

We have a friend who is a Painter. So we went to our friend and said, What is Painting? Not that we demand an answer, but that we may tell you what it is. Painting is the art and science of putting on paint.—Our friend threatened to kick us out of his house.

So we went to another friend. He is a Sculptor. And we said, What is Sculpture? It is the art and science of carving stones.—And our friend, who is an amiable man, counselled us to go home directly, and wondered our wife had let us out, and offered to call a cab.

So we went to another friend, who is a Poet.

And we said, What is Poetry?—And he replied

"The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling"—

Stop, good friend, we said, we merely wish to tell you what it is. Poetry is the art and science of concatenating words.—And as the Poet looked very angry, and as we are very much afraid of angry Poets, we went to yet another friend.

He is a Musician. And we said as before, What is Music? It is the art and science of producing sounds.—And our friend, being a man of decision, laid violent hands upon us, and we landed finally at home, and in bed.

So we dreamt a dream.

And there seemed to arise the Poet. And he seemed to say, There is a man who sits and thinks,—thinks deeply. And his fancy draws up forms and facts from *The Beautiful*. And a *pen* writes them down; and it is POETRY, and he a POET.

And next arose the Painter. And he seemed to say, There is a man who sits and thinks,—thinks deeply. And his fancy draws up forms and facts from *The Beautiful*. And a *pencil* writes them down; and it is PAINTING, and he a PAINTER.

Then the Sculptor. And he seemed to say, There is a man who sits and thinks,—thinks deeply. And his fancy draws up forms and facts from *The Beautiful*. And a *chisel* writes them down; and it is SCULPTURE, and he a SCULPTOR.

And then seemed to arise the Musician. And he said, There is a man who sits and thinks,—thinks deeply. And his fancy draws up forms and facts from *The Beautiful*. And a *harp* writes them down; and it is MUSIC, and he a MUSICIAN.

Then there appeared an Architect. And he commenced, There is a man—'till we cried, Stop, stop! for we knew what he would say,—stop!—and we pulled out of our pocket *The Builder*. And it said (such things occur in dreams)—*The Builder* said, There is a man who stands and builds,—builds with a trowel and a rule,—builds with deals and planks and a hammer and tenpenny nails. And it is ARCHITECTURE, and he an ARCHITECT.

So we said, Go away, we will have none of you. And we would have thrust them both away; but the former of the two entreated us, Will your worship hear me speak one word? And we said at length that fair play was a jewel, and let him say his say. And he said, There is a man who sits and thinks,—thinks deeply. And his fancy draws up forms and facts from *The Beautiful*. And the trowel and the rule and the deals and planks and the hammer and tenpenny nails write them down. And it is ARCHITECTURE, and he an ARCHITECT.

And the Poet and the Painter and the Sculptor and the Musician and the Architect became (such things occur in dreams)—became One. And *The Builder* fled away. And many other figures arose, many of them very small, and joined with the One. And at length it said, Fancy draws up forms and facts from *The Beautiful*: and whoever writes them down, or however, it is ART.

And we said, What then is the art and science of concatenating words?

It is a pen with which the Poet, the Dramatist, the eloquent man, writes down ART.

And the art and science of putting on paint?

A pencil with which the Painter writes down ART.

And the art and science of carving stones?

A chisel with which the Sculptor writes down ART.

And the art and science of producing sounds?

A harp with which the Musician writes down ART.

And the art and science of building?

The trowel and the rule and the hammer and tenpenny nails with which the Architect writes down ART.

So we awoke. And finding *The Builder* again in our pocket, we pulled it out and looked at its definition once more. "Architecture is the art and science of building according to certain rules and laws." But we found that there follows, "As this is a matter of considerable moment, we shall return to it." So we said, Very well, and that we would give it ample room and rope enough.

Architecture a Fine Art? Is "the art of building" a Fine Art? Is "the science of building" a Fine Art? *Cuique in sua arte credendum est*: the builder does not claim that building is a Fine Art. *Cuique in sua arte credendum est*: but the Architect says Architecture is building. Therefore Architecture is not a Fine Art; *quod erat demonstrandum*. And it is a pitiable end. But there it is, plain and unmitigable; it cannot be both,—either Architecture is not Building or Architecture is not a Fine Art.

No; building is but the Poet's pen that gives to any nothing a local habitation and a name. The mere *pen*;—the Architect is the Poet. The mere *pen*; without the guiding hand, the guiding head, a mere pen for ever. The builder is a builder and not an Architect: the Architect an Architect and not a builder. The builder is a very excellent person. So is the cheesemonger. So is every one in his own place. The builder is a very excellent person, and has more sense by a great deal than to claim to be an Architect; it is the Architect that thrusts the honour upon him. The builder is a very excellent person—a very excellent person and very useful. But the Architect also is a very excellent person and very useful; his excellence a different excellence and his use another use. The Architect is an ARTIST. He whose whole claim it is that he is apt in "the art and science of building" is not an Artist. And either he and the Architect are not identical, or the Architect is not an Artist. But architecture is not "the art and science of building" and the Architect—the true Architect—is an Artist.

Wherefore we stretch out our hand—our Art-hand—to the Architect, and give him a welcome to the true Art-brotherhood, to sit down with the Poet the Painter the Composer, the children of Imagination—the priests of *The Beautiful*.

We had stretched out a hand to a man who thereupon gazed very wildly upon us.—Nay, nay, good gentlemen, he said, nay, nay, it may not be; for I am a plain and quiet man; I draw my plans, and please my customers, and mind my business. I do not comprehend this company you would have me keep. I assure you they speak a language strange to me. Nay, nay, it may not be; I will keep mine own company.

Are there none to claim the Architect's seat in the Art-circle? Are all mere builders up of bricks—building them up that they may merely *stand*? Is there no one to claim that his building is but a vehicle to carry his ART? that he builds up bricks that they may be *beautiful*? The bricklayer and the carpenter can build to *stand*—the Architect throws over their building *Beauty*. It is the Beauty that is Architecture: the fabric is building. This is *science*; that ART. A very ex-



cellent thing science; but so is Art. A very good man the builder; but so is the Architect.

With building of course *The Fine Arts' Journal* has no concern whatever. The builder cannot expect his craft to be treated of here. Neither can the builder's man. But in Architecture we claim an indisputable province: and the Architect we claim as a brother in Art. The Architect; not the builder. The Architect; not the builder's man. With the house we have nothing to do: in the beauty of the house we claim an interest. In *Beauty—Architecture—Art*.

## REVIEWS.

*Memoirs and Essays, illustrative of Art, Literature, and Social Morals.* By MRS. JAMESON. Bentley.

This is a delightful writer. Whatever she undertakes to do is so assisted by an earnestness of purpose, that we are assured the thoughts and opinions she puts down are real emanations from an intellect, and matters of faith with the author at the time; being, even if erroneous, true results of circumstance upon intelligence, and not the trashy imitation of opinion, in which the covering of a certain number of pages is often the single and unalloyed purpose of the inventor. The volume before us, while containing much that is foreign to the pages of *The Fine Arts' Journal*, claims the attention of our readers for its opening chapter, 'The House of Titian.' In it they will find that wholesome feeling for things artistic that is so rarely to be met with among writers on the subject. The following comparison between Raphael and Titian contains no spice of affectation, but comes from the feelings of one whose eye had been cultivated to perceive rightly:—

"These wonderful men remain to us as representatives of the two great departments of art. All who went before them, and all who followed after them, may be ranged under the banners of one or the other of these great kings and leaders. Under those of Raphael, appear the majestic thinkers in art, the Florentine and Roman painters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and Albert Durer, in Germany. Ranged on the side of Titian, appear the Venetian, the Lombard, the Spanish, and Flemish masters. Raphael had the antique and Titian, Giorgione as precursors and models; yet to impugn the originality of Raphael and Titian is like impugning the originality of Shakspeare. They, like him, did not hesitate to use, as means, the materials presented to them by the minds of others. They, like him, had minds of such universal and unequalled capacity, that all other originalities seem to be swallowed up, comprehended, as it were, in theirs. How much, in point of frame work and material, Shakspeare adopted, unhesitatingly, from the play-rights of his time, is sufficiently known; how frankly Raphael borrowed a figure from one of his contemporaries, or a group from the antique, is notorious to all who have studied his works.

"I know that there are critics who look upon Raphael as having *secularised*, and Titian as having *sensualised* art; I know it has become a fashion to prefer an old Florentine or Umbrian 'Madonna' to Raphael's 'Galatea,' and an old German, hard visaged, wooden-limbed saint to Titian's 'Venus.' Under one point of view, I quite agree with the critics alluded to. Such preference commands our approbation and our sympathy, if we look to the height of the aim proposed, rather than to the completeness of the performance as such. But here I am not considering art with reference to its aims or its associations, religious or classic; nor with reference to individual tastes, whether they lean to piety or poetry, to the real or the ideal; nor as the reflection of any prevailing mode of belief or existence; but simply as ART,

as the *muta poesis*, the interpreter between nature and man; giving back to us her forms with the utmost truth of imitation, and, at the same time, clothing them with a high significance derived from the human purpose and the human intellect."

To ourselves this essay presents some addition of attraction in the tacit acknowledgment and unpremeditated support it furnishes for opinions we have elsewhere produced on the characteristics of the art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that have made the accomplishment of that period to be rather a stumbling block than an assistance to the painters of our own country and our own time. Examine the following passage as an instance:—

"To understand and feel Titian aright, we ought to know Venice thoroughly,—its *cortili*, as well as its canals: for it is precisely these peculiar, these merely local, characteristics, this subdued gloom in the midst of dazzling sunshine, this splendour of hue, deepened, not darkened, by shade; this seclusion in the midst of vastness; this homeliness in the midst of grandeur; this nobleness in the midst of Art; this repose in the midst of the fulness of life, which we feel alike in Titian's pictures of Venice.

"And then, his men and women, his subtle, dark, keen-eyed, grand-looking men, and his full-formed, luxuriant, yet delicate-featured women! Are they not here, still? Such I have seen, as I well remember at a *festa*, on the Lido,—women, with just such eyes—dark, lustrous and melancholy; and just such hair—in such redundancy, plaited, knotted, looped round the small elegant heads,—sometimes a tress or two escaping from the bands, and falling from their own weight—so like his, and Palma's and Paolo's rich-haired St. Catharines, and St. Barbaras, one would have imagined them as even now walked out of their pictures, or rather walked *into* them, for the pictures were yet more like *life*, than the *life* like pictures!"

Again:—

"Any one who has looked up at a Venetian lady, standing in her balcony, in the evening light, or peeping out from the window of her gondola, must be struck, at once, with the resemblance in colour and countenance to the pictures he has just seen in churches and galleries."

This is not the evidence of a partizan but the remark of a casual observer, that idealism was not more a characteristic of Italian art than of any other; and that its excellence consisted in a close imitation of the nature before it. But what is the deduction from this admission? That receiving such characteristic for a standard, and calling that only high art which must be the production of a locality, can only tend to the multiplication of mannerism. The decline of art in Italy is traceable to the transfer of study, from nature to the imitation of nature; and this in the midst of all those models that had inspired the producers of the excellence the artist was infatuated to copy; yet was not the presence of those models a barrier to the backsliding that ensued. If, then, art deteriorated on the spot, partaking of every advantage enjoyed by the early painters and having all the assistance for imitation arising from familiarity with the same nature, how can an English artist, under another sky, and surrounded by other types of form, hope to succeed in a competition in which imitation of art, not nature, is his fullest accomplishment. Why should that be dignified by the term high art because its vulgarity is not apparent where familiarity has not made it common? We have sufficient of beautiful nature at home to immortalise twenty succeeding schools of painting, and leave room for twenty more; for it is a quality of nature to be inexhaustible. Let the artist, then, reflect that what is surprising in one country is

common-place in another; and that mere strangeness is not excellence anywhere: that the fruit despised by the beggar of the tropical climate is with us a luxury only obtainable by the opulent; while those fruits that grow here without effort would become there delicacies of price; and that species in art, if we may be allowed the term, only can be produced in the highest perfection where it has the most physical facilities in favour of its production. The fair-haired dames of Venice were but a consequence of this craving for the uncommon, and a proof that the beauty of our country, here not valued from too much frequency, was, and is, there, an object of envy and of imitation.

"And, with regard to the Venetian women, every one must remember in the Venetian pictures, not only the peculiar luxuriance but the peculiar colour of the hair—of every golden tint, from a rich full shade of auburn, to a sort of yellow flaxen hue, or, rather, not flaxen, but like raw silk, such as we have seen the peasants of Lombardy carrying over their arms, or on their heads, in great, shining, twisted heaps. I have sometimes heard it asked, with wonder, whether those pale masses of hair, the true "*biondina*" tint, could always have been natural? On the contrary, it was oftener artificial—the colour, not the hair. In the days of the elder Palma, and Giorgione, yellow hair was the fashion, and the paler the tint, the more admired. The women had a method of discharging the natural colour, by first washing their tresses in some chemical preparation, and then exposing them to the sun. I have seen a curious old Venetian print, perhaps satirical, which represents this process. A lady is seated on the roof or balcony of her house, wearing a sort of broad-brimmed hat, without a crown: the long hair is drawn over these wide brims, and spread out in the sunshine, while the face is completely shaded. How they contrived to escape a brain-fever, or a *coup de soleil*, is a wonder."

The fact that the artist's material is not confined to his palette, and that pictures may be painted otherwise than on a canvas, is illustrated by various specimens in the work before us. In the following description of the ascent of a balloon from the ancient amphitheatre at Verona, the mind receives a full and broadly-lighted image of each detail that makes the whole a composition to dwell upon:—

"It was a holiday; all were gaily dressed. There were bands of music, a regiment or two of Austrian soldiers under arms, as usual; and the multitude of spectators, one-half in sunshine, the other half in shade, sat for some time, hushed into silence by suspense; now breaking into a murmur of impatience, swelling like a hollow sound, just heard so far as impatience or discontent are allowed to be audible in this submissive, military-ridden country. Meantime, the process of filling the balloon was going on, even in that very recess whence the wild beasts were let loose on their victims. When it was filled, and while still held down by the cords, the aeronaut slowly made the circuit of the arena above the heads of the people, throwing down as he passed showers of bonbons on the ladies beneath. The men then let go the ropes, and the machine ascended swiftly, to the sound of triumphant music and animated *bravos*, and floated off in the direction of Mantua. Many hundreds of the people rushed up to the topmost summit of the building, which is without any defensive parapet, and there they stood gesticulating on the giddy verge, their forms strongly defined against the blue sky. We also ascended:—what a scene was there! Below us the city spread out in all the vividness of an Italian atmosphere; with its winding river and strange old bridges, and cypress-crowned hill; on one side the sun setting in a blaze of purple and gold—on the other, the pale large moon rising like a gigantic spectre of herself—and far to the south, the balloon diminishing to a speck—a point, till lost in the depths of space. Turning again to the interior, we saw

the crowds sinking from sight, with an awful rapidity, as if swallowed up by the cavern-like vomitories; and by the time we had descended to the arena, there were but a few stragglers left, flitting like ghosts to and fro in the midst of its vast circuit already gloomily dark, while all without was still glowing in evening light."

Her appreciation of Titian and his works is thus happily intimated:—

"Titian neither painted like a monk, nor like an academician, nor like an angel, as it was said of Raphael; nor like a Titan, as one might say of Michael Angelo; but he painted like a man, like a man to whom God had given sense and soul, a free mind, a healthy and a happy temperament; one whose ardent human sympathies kept him on earth and humanised all his productions; who was satisfied with the beauty his mother, Nature, revealed to him, and reproduced the objects he beheld in such a spirit of love as made them lovely."

But we are tempted to transgress, and must confine our further extracts to the very graphic description of the author's pilgrimage to the house occupied for fifty years by the painter, and in which he died under circumstances so appalling:—

"It is curious, that a house so rich in association, and, as one should suppose, so dear to Venice, should, even now, be left obscure, half-ruined, and well-nigh forgotten, after being, for two centuries, unknown, unthought of. It was with some difficulty we found it. The direction given to us was, *Nella contrada di S. Canciano, in Luogo appellato Biro-grande, nel campo Rotto, sopra la palude o Canale ch'è in faccia all'isola di Murano dove ora stanno innalzate le Fondamenta nuove.* Minute enough, one would think; but even our gondolier, one of the most intelligent of his class, was here at fault."

After some search the party find themselves—

"In San Canciano, near the church of the Gesuiti, when a young girl, looking out of a dilapidated, unglazed window, herself like a Titian portrait set in an old frame—so fresh, so young, so mellow-checked, with the redundant tresses and full dark eyes, *alla Veneziana*—after peeping down archly on the perplexed strangers, volunteered a direction to the Casa de Tiziano, in the Campo Rotto: for she seemed to guess, or had overheard our purpose; and, after threading a few close, narrow passages, we came upon the place and edifice we sought. That part of it looking into the Campo Rotto is a low wine-house, dignified by the title of the '*Trattaria di Tiziano*,' and under its vine-shadowed porch sat several men and women regaling. The other side looking into a little garden—even the very '*dilettevole giardino de Messer Tiziano*' is portioned out to various inhabitants; on the exterior wall some indications of fresco painting, which once adorned it, are still visible. A laughing, ruffianly, half-tipsy gondolier, with his black cap stuck roguishly on one side, and a countenance which spoke him ready for any mischief, insisted upon being our cicerone, and an old shoemaker or tailor, I forget which, did the honours with sober civility. We entered by a little gate leading into the garden, and up a flight of stone steps to an antique porch, overshadowed by a vine, which had but lately yielded its harvest of purple grapes, and now hung round the broken pillars and balustrades in long, wild, neglected festoons. From this entrance another flight of stone steps led up to the principal apartments, dilapidated, dirty, scantily furnished. The room which had once been the chief saloon and Titian's atelier, must have been spacious and magnificent, capable of containing very large-sized pictures. We found it now portioned off, by wooden partitions, into various small tenements; still, one portion of it remained, in size and loftiness, oddly contrasted with the squalid appearance of the inmates. About forty years ago there was seen, on a compartment of the ceiling, a beautiful group of dancing Cupids. One of the lodgers, a certain Messer Francesco Breve, seized with a sudden fit of cleanliness, whitewashed it over; but, being

made aware of his mistake, he tore it down, and attempted to cleanse off the chalk, for the purpose of selling it. What became of the maltreated relic is not known. The little neglected gardens, that once sloped down to the shore, and commanded a view over the lagoon, to Murano, was now shut in by high buildings intercepting all prospect but of the sky, and looked strangely desolate. The impression left by the whole scene was most melancholy; and no associations with the past, no images of beauty and of glory, came between us and the intrusive vulgarity of the present."

The work contains details of many circumstances of the life of Titian, of which we present our readers with the *finale*:—

"Here was Titian, then in his ninetieth year, visited by Vasari, who found him still cheerful and healthful, in full possession of his faculties, and looking back on a long life of glory and prosperity, and pronounced him the happiest among mortal men. Here, in the same hour, did he lay dying of the pestilence, which had half depopulated Venice—on a bed near him, his son Orazio. The curators of the sick, in the sternly-pitiful fulfilment of their office, carried Orazio to the plague hospital; but they left the old man, for whom there was no hope, to die alone. It appears that, before he could have ceased to breathe, some of those wretches who come as surely in the train of such horrors as vultures in the rear of carnage—robbers, who went about spoiling the dead and the dying—entered his room, ransacked it, carried off his jewels, the gifts of princes, valuable cups and vases chased in gold and silver, and, worse than all, some of his most precious pictures. Let us hope that the film of death was already on his eyes—that he saw it not—felt it not. He died on the 27th of August, 1576."

The memoir of Adelaide Kemble is written in a laudatory vein that we might carp at but for the occasion. It was the accompaniment of a series of full-length drawings, executed by John Hayter, for the Marquis of Tichfield; we think it were as well if it had not left them. There is room for enough of excellence far beneath the perfection here attributed.

But Mrs. Jameson acknowledges indirectly that personal friendship influences her pen on this occasion, and the reader must make allowances accordingly. Our authoress asserts that—

"Any one who had undertaken to write of Adelaide Kemble without knowing her personally, could never have done justice to her artistic excellence; and that for one, to whom she has long been personally known, to write of her merely as an artist, is very difficult."

This is candid on the part of the author, and is so far useful to the reader, as directing him to qualify his appreciation accordingly. But Mrs. Jameson seems afterwards to insist that judgment on art is not a judgment or estimate of the thing done; but of something made up by a mixture of the production and the producer. For this corruption in criticism the following attempt at argument is eminently feeble:—

"It has been said, and with a plausible appearance of candour, that, in estimating the distinguished artist in any department of art, the moral qualities of the individual, apart from the manifestation of the genius, concerns us not; that our business is with the processes, mental, moral, or accidental (if anything be accidental), through which it is produced and perfected; that, in bringing these considerations to bear on the principal subject, we hazard injustice, if we do not offer indignity, to the object of our admiration. Yet, to set such considerations wholly aside, what is it but to confound the artist with the artisan?"

We confess we should be at a loss to point out where the artist leaves off and the artisan com-

mences; but we are quite sure that morality, or even general intellectuality, as unconnected with profession, does not make the distinction. If it is necessary to know an artist's life and manners to appreciate his works, what do we know of Shakespeare, or of Homer? What do we know of Raphael, but that he died early a victim to dissipation? Were the effects of Edmund Kean's acting upon his audience lessened by their knowledge that he was a drunkard? No, no. Mrs. Jameson's personal intimacy, though necessary to write the memoirs of an individual, is not an assistance in estimating his or her productions. Their works must be looked at for their individual worth, in comparison with those of their rivals, without reference to the virtues or vices of their authors, the memories of which will have been forgotten, when the works themselves will have demonstrated the justice of their claims by the permanence of their reputation. It is the corruption of criticism here upheld as right, on which is founded the ephemeral fame that dies with the individual on whom it has been bestowed.

The following paragraph exhibits more healthiness in thought:—

"The world has been accused of regarding the profession of the stage with unjustifiable contempt; but without referring here to insolent prejudices, which I have heard avowed, even where they were most ungraceful and most ridiculous, it seems to me that the artists, taken as a class, must blame themselves for the low place they hold in the public estimation. I have known those of the profession who, in the midst of infinite personal assumption and a dependance on applause, almost mean in its excess, have affected to hold in absolute contempt the profession by which they lived—to speak of it merely as a forced means of gaining a livelihood, and to talk as if it were beneath them. Now this is pitiable, and the effect is debasing. I have heard such professional people murmur bitterly against the pride of the Kembles and the Macreadys. They might reflect, that the pride from which their individual *amour propre* may suffer more or less, has raised their whole profession in the public estimation—would raise it higher, if elevated principle and self-respect were a little more the rule—not, as I am afraid it is, the exception."

The following will be interesting to many of our readers:—

"It is recorded of Mrs. Siddons, that she had, at different periods, adopted successively three different ways of giving one phrase in *Lady Macbeth*—

*Macbeth.* If we should fail,—  
*Lady M.* We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking place, And we'll not fail.

At first with a quick contemptuous interrogation, "We fail?" as if indignant at the implied doubt; afterwards with the note of admiration, and an accent of astonishment, laying the emphasis on the word *we*—"We fail!" Lastly, she fixed on what must appear to all the true reading, and consistent with the fatalism of the character, "We fail."—with the simple period, modulating her voice to a deep, low, resolute tone, as if she had said, "If we fail, why then *we fail*, and all is over."

There is much of antiquarian speculation on the Xanthian marbles. Some items towards a biography of that clever but idle artist, Washington Alston, and two other essays relating to the position of the softer sex in society as it is, that are not within the sphere of our remarks, if we had not already extended our notice beyond the space we can prudently afford.



*The Newleafe Discourses on the Fine Art Architecture.* By ROBERT KERR, Architect. 12mo. London: 1846.

To do justice to these *Newleafe Discourses* would require more space and time than we can just now afford; for, though the volume is small, it is pregnant with matter of vital importance to the character, condition, and claims of architecture as one of the fine arts; the purport of the book being to show that very contracted, erroneous, and unworthy views of it, in its quality of a fine art, now prevail, and that the study of it as such is all but completely merged in what is either merely mechanical, and belonging to building and construction, or else archaeological and antiquarian—the history and classification of styles, or matter-of-fact circumstances relative to individual structures. Yet, though “Mr. Newleafe” vindicates the pretensions of architecture as pure art—as one of the arts of design—for its intrinsic æsthetic powers; in short, as being building sublimed and elevated into the sphere of art; his doctrine is not likely to be very palatable to the profession generally; on the contrary, particularly distasteful to many who belong to what he calls the “beef-eater’s” class, and who have hitherto passed with the public for being, and, perhaps, have mistaken themselves for, *architects*, in the more honourable sense of such title. Nor is it professional men alone who will be discomposed by this mischievous little book—as, no doubt, they will style it—because the whole tribe of archaeologists, antiquaries, ecclesiologists, vitruvianists, and those addicted to symbolism and other recondite mysteries and crotchets, must feel mortally aggrieved. Had “Mr. Newleafe” been a dull prosy fellow, he might have been forgiven, at least overlooked, instead of which his book is not only readable, but exceedingly amusing reading. There are many parts in it penned with vivacious humour, and equal to anything in Dickens—characters, too, that are more characteristic in their way than the writer’s now proverbial *Mr. Pecksniff*! One or two living professors are here *booked pro bono publico*; nor is the institute at all spared, it being taken to task in the severest manner. We sincerely recommend these discourses, because the revolution they are calculated to lead to, would, in our opinion, be a highly desirable and salutary reform in one branch of fine art.

*Fantasia Gracieuse.* By J. THALBERG. Published by Cramer and Co.

Thalberg has written many morceaux, but he has never, until now, written a fantasia which is to be attempted by others but first-rate pianists. The subject is taken from Bellini, and is admirably treated. The title is exceedingly appropriate, for every page abounds with elegant passages and beautiful melodies. It is, without exception, the most popular pianoforte piece that has been written since the days of Cramer and Dussek.

*“Come hither pretty Fairy.”* By G. LINLEY. Published by Cramer and Co.

This song is the latest composition of Mr. Linley, the popular ballad-writer. The melody is sparkling and original, and well adapted to the words, which are also his own composition, and are simple and elegant. We hope it will meet with the patronage it merits.

On Monday, the 2nd instant, a general assembly of the academicians was held at the Royal Academy, when Mr. Edward Samuel Ward was elected an associate of that institution.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. EDITOR.—I do not wait till you come out; but throw in my word instantly without ceremony, because I think I have an important thing to say, and the beginning the best time to say it.

I find you speak of including architecture in your subjects. I am a student of that art, and my recommendation is, that you allow more space than journals generally seem inclined to do, for students and the young to express their views and feelings in a correspondence corner. I refer to all the other arts as well as my own. True, our letters and complaints and amicable disputes may not carry all the completeness, the know-all about it, of older men; but what when old men won’t write? They are too cautious, or too proud, or they won’t trouble themselves, or something else of the sort. And when such as I presume to write: oh, it is only a student, he is not worth the room. I wish you would give us a space in your journal, to get into nice little quarrels, and abuse each other’s opinions backwards and forwards. It will make a very interesting corner in your journal, if you do. I appeal to you, if you don’t take more interest comparatively in the correspondence of a paper, than in the formal leaders and editorial remarks. Correspondence is the voice of the practical world, and we read it therefore with additional interest. We can quarrel with it when we cannot quarrel with leaders; we can reply to it (and there is a great pleasure in this) when we dare not reply to the editor. And, thus, I would not care much to say, that the journal which has no correspondence neglects a very important part of its use, and a very valuable means of its success. I wonder how much of the success of certain weekly newspapers depends upon the “answers to correspondents.” A capital dodge this. We like to see ourselves in print, although it should only be “A. B. inadmissible,” or “X. Y. had better apply at the station house.”

I have spoken as if nobody but students would take part in your correspondence. But it is to be hoped, that if you give proper importance to this valuable part, you might, like the ingenious committee, the other day, who invented the “new move to seduce old stagers into competitions,” be able to seduce the old stagers also into correspondence.

But I trespass too much. If you take my advice, and profit by it (as I am sure you will), don’t forget your humble servant,

AN ARCHITECTURAL STUDENT.

Kensington, Nov. 2.

[There is much good sense in our correspondent’s advice. We take it. We shall always have great pleasure, and consider it a duty, to publish good correspondence. Our object is to teach. It is by no means a second-rate means of effecting this end, to let the pupils teach each other. Controversy brings out truth. And it not unfrequently happens that a sound idea may reach the editorial closet from the outer world, which would otherwise have never appeared. And with this expression of our hearty will, it remains, now, with “An Architectural Student,” and such as he, to follow it up, by affording us the power, to make a good “correspondence corner.”—ED.]

SIR,—Lord Morpeth sends a circular among the Royal Academicians, inquiring their opinions of The Statue on the Arch. Lord Morpeth means well doubtless. But whether he does well, or rather, whether he does exactly the best possible, in this measure, I must pause before deciding.

If the criticisms of the Academicians should turn in the same course as the famous letter to *The Times* by their architecture professor, Lord Morpeth will have done very ill indeed. For there is a kind of evidence which tells against itself: and, if the Royal Academy have nothing to bring forward but precedent, it may end in the statue on the arch becoming a fixed fact; for honest plain common-sense John Bull cannot be convinced by that kind of argument. “Mr. Bull knows very well, that precedent is nonsense.” Says he, it’s all very well, masters, to talk to me about ancient

Romans, and Bellori, and the hideous incongruity between “a strictly and peculiarly Roman monument,” and “a figure in the costume of the 19th century;”—it’s all very well, masters, this is,—all very well,—but I can’t understand it, it’s too lofty logic for me, masters—all right, dare say, all right enough, if you would just go and tell it to the marines.

And some good souls (there always will be simple people), have begun to attempt to try to move the very “Institute of British Architects” itself; in the amiable hope (there always will be simple people, as we say) that the “Council” will “pronounce” in this matter. If it were not that I never say such things, I should here say—“Don’t you wish you may get it?” Not that I would not be very glad to see their “pronouncement.” Not that the long longed-for spectacle of this public institution doing anything like public duty would not be an exceedingly delightful thing. Not that I would not be willing and ready to make vast allowances, and absolutely perhaps to avoid criticism entirely. But the Institute does not make “pronouncements.” It is a quiet, unobtrusive, snug little circle, that keeps itself within itself. It does not talk scandal over its coffee, and turn over all the affairs of the parish. It lets the outer world go on as it lists. It doesn’t kick up rumpuses, but minds its own business; the very model of a peaceable little snuggery, an example to all that looks on. And, therefore, if it now should really “move”—I might say a great many things, but I shall just remark that I should very much amazed indeed. For it is not every day that one sees St. Paul’s walk down Ludgate-hill, or the Tower have a morning “dip” in the Thames.

But even if it were to move, query would it move in anything like the right direction? And here again I have another difficulty. Indeed, if I should be surprised to see the sluggish move, much more surprised should I be to see it move in the right direction. I think I see the manifesto! The heavy argumentation of “C. R. C.” would be light reading compared with the dialectics of the “Council.” His Bellori would be but a unit among their host of ancient fighting men. His wonderful “authority of the medals” but dust among the heavy matter they would throw into the scale. Poor Bull would be perfectly bewildered with the shower of Romans and Greeks, and great masters and authorities the “Council” would bring about his ears;—perfectly choked with the cloud of precedent they would cram down his wondering throat. Unless he were to show himself (as seems most likely) a sensible man; and then it would be, All very well, masters, as before.

In fact, when I think of it, I would advise the “council” not to pronounce; because I very much fear that nothing more is needed than the logic of the “council” to take down at once the rest of the scaffolding.

There is a reason for everything; precedent is not reason. “The Architect’s province in this matter is to point out to Mr. Bull the facts of the case (the reason), that Mr. Bull may see them for himself, and be satisfied for himself; not to produce Bellori and medals and Vitruvii to show what the ancients did! What does Mr. Bull care for the ancients? What he wants is the common sense reason and truth of the matter.” Is there any reason against the statue on the arch?—if there be not, then say no more about it; if there be, tell us what it is. Plain men can’t understand it any other way.

That the statue on the arch is opposed to reason I firmly maintain; and therefore I say, take it down: but for the sake of reason, not for the sake of precedent. All the precedent possible cannot form reason. All the chalk in the world can’t make cheese.

The reason, then, the common sense of the matter, is this—first, as regards the statue; secondly, as regards the arch. The statue, by being placed on such a pedestal as the arch at present forms for it is, first—depreciated in value. It is a monument, and a grand one. It becomes a thing of the arch: its independence,

its self-completeness, destroyed. The colossal monument of £30,000 value is put in a most excellent position for concealing its size, and disguising its costliness. The grand homage to a great man is placed in a most excellent position for most effectually diluting the compliment. And if men can scarcely think so, then they need but to see such a work in fitter circumstances. The statue is, secondly, marred in its artistic effect. And this needs not to be enlarged upon. To put a sculpture up there! The meanest capacity himself can criticise this. And thus the statue is doubly disadvantaged, doubly depreciated. First, the £30,000 should look like £30,000; and the grand monument should look like a grand monument. And secondly, we ought to be able, without telescopic aid to see it; and we ought to be able to see it in something like a rational, natural way—(for a duke was never made that we should look at the soles of his feet; nor a duke's horse that we should gaze upwards at his belly. Horses and men were made to be seen *before*, not *above* us). This, then, being the *reason* as regards the statue, the reason as regards the arch is no less simple, if architects would shut their eyes to the superstitions of precedent. The arch is depreciated. It is a triumphal arch; it becomes a pedestal to a statue. It loses its magnitude, its grandeur, its height and lightness, its self-completeness, and its self-character.

I must speak the truth. The statue on the arch is not so bad—not so bad by half—as many other matters in our metropolis. And I am at a loss to tell exactly how it happens that so much noise has been made about the present lesser sin, when so frequently a so much greater sin has been allowed to pass unheeded. But it often happens so.

Yet past transgression is no excuse for present iniquity; and I hope to see the statue removed. Removed from its destruction of the arch. Removed from its own destruction. Let it be taken to a site which shall rather advantage it—make it nobler, grander, rather than less noble and less grand. And a site provided, for heaven's sake, not by precedent, but by reason—reason, good calculation, and art, which are the same.

*The Times*, as *The Times* alone can do it, has eaten its former words, and come out in favour of the statue on the arch: "We cannot help making the *amende honorable* to his bronze eminence, and candidly avowing our opinion that there will be no great harm done should he be suffered to remain where he is." Very cool of *The Times*.

"It is not impossible," *The Times* continues, "that the ridicule which has been heaped upon the whole affair, from the beginning, may have contributed in a great measure to produce the present reaction in its favour. (*The Times* says it speaks the public opinion.) Truth seldom gains by exaggeration." And so on. True enough. In my former letter (written previously to the appearance of *The Times*' recantation), I happen to have indicated this very matter. By making so great a fuss about a lesser sin when so many greater sins are abroad unchallenged, the defenders of taste have over-reached themselves. It ought to have been distinctly owned from the commencement that the statue on the arch is by no means equally monstrous with this, that, and the other. It is not so bad a thing, I repeat, not so bad a thing by half, as many other such matters that we make no fuss about at all—not so bad a thing by half as the best of ten thousand conceits which the orthodox and pure have permitted and would this day permit to pass without a slightest twinge of conscience to discompose their serene and classic souls. It is bad; but if we allow this, that, and t'other to be good, it is not bad. We have trained the public too well in sin to succeed in arousing conscience in such a—certainly not mortal sin as this. It is bad, very bad, *very bad indeed*, but it is of no use to hold it up as such a "*monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens*" to simple men whom we have educated in the sights of London.

*The Times* pretends to have only now discovered that the statue was *expressly designed for the arch*. Of course it was. And Nelson's statue was *expressly designed for the column too*. There is no

doubt of it. But it does not follow that it is any the better therefore.

I cannot but think "C. R. C." is at the bottom of *The Times*' change of opinion, with his Bellori and medals, and other absurd twaddle. "For," says *The Times*, "in answer to the alleged want of precedent—a fault which, in the eyes of some people, outweighs every other consideration, it will be sufficient to state that the objection is unfounded. There is the 'MARCUS AURELIUS' at Wilton; and there is in Gell's *Pompeiana* the remains of an arch—a public thoroughfare—surmounted by a single bronze equestrian statue of, we believe, Augustus." Some people! Those fiddlededeedum people—the architects, that is. They are the persons whose opinion we ought to be able to depend upon in such a matter as this. They ought to guide us. What is their course of argument? Precedent! Is that all? Well, we'll give them precedent, if that's all. There is "*the 'MARCUS AURELIUS' at Wilton*" and the *Pompeiana* AUGUSTUS: not over and above convincing to us, we must acknowledge; but good enough for those who can argue by precedent. If precedent be good for anything, here it is. And now we hope you will be satisfied, good people, since precedent is your *only* objection. (It is "every other consideration" that, in the eyes of the "some people," precedent outweighs. Mark this, "*consideration*," not *objection*. There is no other *objection* offered.) And then the cutting coolness with which *The Times* casts down "*THE MARCUS AURELIUS' at Wilton*!" The very thing that we all had such merriment over when Sir Frederick Trench brought it forward at the beginning of the matter. There's the Marcus Aurelius for you. How *The Times* laughed at Sir Frederick and his "*Marcus Aurelius*" in the first act! Now comes the second act, and says *The Times*, with a sly wink, I say, Sir Frederick, let's have that "*Marcus Aurelius*" of yours for a moment to give these people. A sly dog, *The Times*, and very bitter when he likes. Just give us a touch of that old "*Marcus Aurelius*." Well, well, if this do not cure precedent, what can cure it?

But *The Times*, being a common sense person, and unsophisticated in architecture, cannot forbear arguing the matter, so far as is possible, by reason. (For to the architect alone is the blessedness vouchsafed of being satisfiable by precedent.) "An equestrian statue, if destined for *terra firma*, should be in an attitude of *motion*, not standing on its four legs in a position of rest and contemplation." O, indeed! Is the spectacle of a real horse "standing on its four legs in a position of rest and contemplation," so utterly unexampled a thing in nature? Are all things of *terra firma* always in motion? I am simple enough to imagine that the "attitude" of the horse depends upon quite other considerations than whether it is to be set on *terra firma*, or on the top of a house. The sculpture tells its own story, surely, independent of the site. The "attitude" is a poetic abstraction. The figure is *the hero on the field* (as I have always believed it), not the Duke of Wellington and his horse, on a house-top. If the site govern the attitude, then we should say that the statue of a horse "destined" for the top of a house, ought to be in an attitude befitting the situation—an attitude of surprise and bodily fear, and not, on any account, "a position of rest and contemplation," unless it were described in some inscription underneath for the public benefit, that "The horse is supposed to be a very sagacious horse, and very cool in temperament," and is engaged in "contemplation" as to the most feasible means of reaching his native *terra firma* once more in safety.

Or is this another bitter sarcasm of *The Times*, to hint that Mr. Wyatt's horse is represented in "contemplation" of a very suitable kind, to the dangerous position in which he has by wicked hands been placed? It is difficult to comprehend *The Times*.

But we cannot blame *The Times* for its sophistry, when those to whom the public ought to be able to look for counsel and criticism have so wretchedly exposed their senselessness. (It is but last week, that *The Builder* speaks with pious horror of the

terrible malefaction that "on the representation of a strictly and peculiarly Roman monument, a figure in the costume of the nineteenth century is to be permitted!" A monstrous incongruity, "which of itself, in ordinary cases, would be fatal.") We cannot fairly claim artistic criticism from *The Times*. And when they from whom we are entitled to expect it have brought forward nothing but precedent, against the statue on the arch, we cannot blame common sense men, if they consider this as virtually an admission that reason against it there is none.

## THE FINE ARTS.

### ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.

YESTERDAY (last Monday) evening, the first general ordinary meeting for the session, of this body, took place at their rooms, in Lower Grosvenor-street. Mr. Mair, a fellow of the institute, read a very able and interesting paper, descriptive of an ancient palatial structure, situated at Al Hather, in Mesopotamia, and of some antiquities lately discovered at Nimrod, near the site of ancient Nineveh, by Mr. Layard, the enterprising explorer of antiquity, in Asia. Mr. Layard, like Belzoni, Fellows, and others, who have thrown light on this department of knowledge, is not immediately connected with art, being a young solicitor, who became a traveller in Asia for amusement. His researches have been eminently curious and successful; and some of the fruits of them, consisting of sculptures and statuary, are now on their way home, at the expense of the British government, who have also furnished the means to Mr. Layard to pursue his labours on an extended scale. Al Hather, which is situate about twenty-four hours' march from Mosul on the Tigris, is supposed by Mr. Layard to belong to the period of the Arsacid dynasty or Parthian kings of Persia. In the course of his excavations he found, in the vaulted chambers of the palace, the rings for hanging lamps, and the nails to which tapestry had been attached on the walls, still perfect. The city was surrounded by a circular rampart and ditch, and was abandoned, it would seem, about the same time as the neighbouring city of Teshphon, to the ruins of which, as described by Buckingham, those of Al Hather are stated to bear a strong resemblance. With respect to the ruins of Nimrod, also investigated by Mr. Layard, it was observed by Mr. Tite, vice-president of the institute, that Rich and the best authorities attributed them, and all the ruins on and near the site of Nineveh, to Nimrod, and there could be no doubt that the locality was the most ancient seat of the human race. Mr. Layard considers that the marbles he is recovering there, have been underground since the time of Sennacherib. They appear to be executed in a high style of art, which apparently bears some resemblance to the Egyptian. Many cuneiform or arrow-headed inscriptions have been observed in the ruins, and the result of what has already been done is to throw considerable light, with a prospect of more, upon an interesting but very dark portion of ancient history. The meeting, the chair of which was occupied by Earl de Grey, the president, after an interesting discussion, voted thanks to Mr. Layard and separated.—*Times*.

[We frankly confess that we have here occupied considerable space, with matter which has nothing whatever to do with the Fine Arts, and therefore has no claim upon a journal such as ours. We frankly confess it. Yet we have given this report a place because, when we cannot have things as they ought to be, we must take up with things as they are. The first meeting for the session of the Royal Institute of British Architects! Doubtless an earnest of what is to come. Could the wicked writer of the story of the *Domus Yacca* have seen, with prophetic eye, while he wrote it, this the very first meeting that was to be reported afterwards? Or has the reporter of the *Times* plagiarised from the "report as ordered"? Well, there was bread in Falstaff's bill: and perhaps there was architecture talked of at "the first meeting for the session of this body." But we cannot but remark that it



does not exactly come up to our notions of the art, although we will admit that they may be peculiar.

And so the marbles have been underground, it appears, since the time of Sennacherib! How priceless, then, reader, how priceless! For the older the better, all the world knows. (Memorandum—Formula for finding with ease and precision, even in the most difficult cases and with the meanest possible capacity, the exact value of an ancient work of art:—Take its value at the present day, take off 5 per centum for delapidation, and 5 per centum for the superior skill of modern times, and multiply by the square of the number of years of antiquity. The result is the result desired.) Since the time of Sennacherib!

"The Assyrian" came down like a wolf on the fold,  
And his cohorts—

Imagine the thought! What need to tell us that they are "executed in a high style of art"? Who could doubt it? "Bearing resemblance to the Egyptian," too! Better still; still more inviolably beautiful; an additional evidence (if additional were needed) of their divinest loveliness! Bah! the rude carvings of ancient barbarians—mere red Indians—coarse, naked, bloody savages in the old old world, long long ago, when men were little better than the brutes that perish—old rubbish, for their sheer antiquity, proudly purchased by the foolish Englishman, in this 19th century of christendom, as invaluable treasures of art! (Heaven save the mark!) The British lion expends his thousands on the spiritless crude hackings of old barbarian times, and claims to be advancing art! Royal institutes, under titled presidency, sit and actually, without a smile, talk of this as art! and sip their cups of coffee afterwards, as if they had no sin upon their souls! Well, we hope for the best. We hope to see something very fine now in the architectural way after this. We hope the influence of Mr. Mair's prelection on the "ancient palatial structure," and the "antiquities lately discovered," will soon and very long be seen for good in the architecture of England. We hope that architects will be stirred up now to renewed orthodoxy, to abandon at once and for ever all "original conceptions," and to stick to the "real ancient designs." There's nothing like precedent: it is the best substitute in life for troublesome DESIGN. There's nothing like orthodoxy: it is the best substitute in life for troublesome GENIUS. There's nothing like archaeology: it is the best substitute in life for troublesome ARCHITECTURE. Nothing like them: they bring the whole concern down to the meanest capacity. There's no quarrelling now, no difficulty, no dividing the house. All is plain-sailing and clear—very plain-sailing and very clear. Nothing like them: the steam engine will soon do away with the necessity for hands; these have already done away with the necessity for brains. Nothing like them—nothing like them in the world—for stupid people.

#### THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

JACK FALSTAFF says, "I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that there is wit in other men." The Wellington Statue, if it could speak, might say "whether I am or am not an absurdity myself, I have been the cause of an enormous amount of nonsense among the critics." It would be an excellent illustration of the state of criticism among the mighty pressocracy to collect the antagonistic stupidities that have been produced on this occasion. The statue has been too large and too small, and the arch or pedestal has been too high and too low, and too strong and too weak; and the *Times* was rabid, and the *Daily News* was rabid, and *Punch* was rabid; while the committee, who knew that the *Times* and the *Daily News* and *Punch* were no authorities on the subject, paid not the slightest attention to their clamour. Where were those who should have given opinions on the occasion? Why, those whose opinions would have been worth listening to were not fond of jumping to a conclusion without sufficient data being furnished for their base; and artists were generally shy, in spite of the assertions made by the press, that every artistical opinion was against the

proposed site. At length the obstruction is cleared away, and the figure is not found to be too large. Indeed, it is so different from all general calculation on the subject, that the *Athenæum* very innocently asks the committee if they have not had the advantage of a model for the assistance of their own decision, and reproaches them with having kept the advantage to themselves. The *Builder* now takes a new position, and calls it an absurdity to place a figure in modern costume upon a Roman pedestal. But, as we must have either Roman, or Greek, or Gothic, or something compounded from them—for there is no modern contrivance that has obtained general approbation—it follows that, to suit the *Builder*, there must be either no pedestal whatever, or the duke must be exhibited in naturalibus—an experiment which has been tried and failed to please before. The strange part of this affair is, that the statue itself has almost entirely escaped remark. The quality of the production, as a work of art, has never been a question with the critics; and now it is no longer of interest with any one to refer to that which, under other circumstances, would have been principal. It is said that Lord Morpeth has written to the leading members of the Royal Academy, to request their written opinions upon the subject. We hope the academicians will consult previous to putting pen to paper, that something like agreement may be found among them. There are few specimens of art that would suggest to forty given individuals the same positive judgment of its fitness. The statue is a portrait of a man, and we believe, also, of a horse. Now, we have some misgivings about the horse's nose; but as the duke's nose is something out o' common, we do not know but the charger on which he rode might have some nasal peculiarity to justify the sculptor, and we refrain. We believe that the very necessity for likeness compelled the artist to quietness of composition, and we commend his avoidance of those melodramatic perpetrations of which the court-yard to the Palace of Versailles furnishes so many ridiculous examples. Some assert that it was of no use casting the statue of such colossal proportions for a position where those proportions have no longer a colossal effect to the eye of the observer. But any knowledge of art would have told these critics that a large object of that description requires a certain distance to be seen as a whole, that any excess of perspective in a statue is a distortion, and the same objection would apply to the Duke of York and the Nelson. We are not among those who expect that every work of art shall be a thing without "a hinge to hang a doubt upon." There exist some dozen of statues that are the astonishment of the civilised world; and of these there are none that might not be better. We must, therefore, be prepared to honour a *chef d'œuvre* in art when its occurrence is vouchsafed, without being angry that it is the exception instead of the rule.—H. C. M.

THE NELSON MONUMENT AGAIN.—That very unlucky concern, the Nelson Candlestick, in Trafalgar-square, has come to a stand-still once more. One after another have enemies come in—the enemies of genius and the beautiful—to prevent the completion of the devices of Mr. Railton's heart. And now at last comes the last enemy himself—Death. He can't hit the column, so he hits poor Ternouth, the sculptor. But Death, as we have said, is the last enemy; and so it is to be hoped that the Candlestick will have no more opposition to encounter. Bad at the best, no doubt; at present it is worse. Bad is better than worse. So we hope again that this will be the last encounter, and that it soon will be all over. Immortality comes then. We like the idea of immortality. We should like to win immortality. We have no doubt Mr. Railton has won it. We like the idea of immortality prodigiously; but we should not like to go down to immortality upon the Nelson column.

MR. GALPIN has just returned from a lengthened sketching tour to the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, where he has been applying his broad pencil so successfully as to have received

very high commendation from the poet laureate, Wordsworth, who guarantees its fidelity.

#### THE DRAMA.

It may appear that in this, our first number, the Drama does not hold that rank among its peers to which its peculiar devotees may think it has a claim. To this it might be replied that the position of theatrical affairs afford little opportunity for producing papers of interest on the subject; but we shall not use such subterfuge. There is much of interest in the drama as it is; and we do not shrink from the redemption of the pledge we have given in the first page. We shall, then, in an early number, commence a series of analyses of the dramatic means possessed by each of the principal theatres, and endeavour to show, not only what the actors have already done, but also what those means, properly developed, are capable of accomplishing. We shall also extend our visits to the numerous minor establishments, and present to the public our estimate of the talent they contain. In doing this, we shall, there is no doubt, be enabled to prove that there are many forced into attempts beyond their capacity for fulfilment, while many others are denied opportunities for exhibiting the power that is in them. We shall show that theatres are now not merely institutions for the acting of pieces on the stage, but that they have also attached to them a workshop for the manufacture of the thing acted; to the labourer in which it is rather more than suspicious that the compositions of confiding authors are submitted. We invite attention to this subject from dramatic writers generally.

MR. MACREADY'S SHYLOCK.—The actor of the time has upheld the reputation he had acquired on this side of the water by a triumphant continuation of successes on the other. *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, with the aid of *Richelieu*, *Virginius*, and *Werner*, the last being, in some sort, a revival, have drawn crowded and attentive audiences to the Surrey Theatre for eight consecutive weeks, in the last of which, the character of *Shylock*, as being a novelty, was most effective in attracting an audience. From the fact that Mr. Macready has not chosen to appear in this character for some years, we are led to suppose that it is not a favourite with him. This may, perhaps, arise from its insufficient length for conferring that consequence in a play that is required from the starring system that is now prevalent. Whether this is, or is not, the cause of failure, we do not think that so much artistic development was given to Mr. Macready's personation of the *Jew*, as, if his heart and soul had been thrown into the character, he would have been capable of exhibiting. It will seem strange to some of our readers, but a long observation of the drama has given us a confidence in predicting the success of a scene upon the pronunciation of the first sentence by an actor, often of the first word. It is the key note of the whole, and, if taken too high, or too low, for the compass of the actor's power, he will surely break down somewhere, or sacrifice essentials for his own safety. Mr. Macready's first words are often set as a task upon his endurance. This continual strain for execution has given and sustained in him a power that is not equalled by any other. This power to execute is not at all times sufficiently controlled by that philosophy of perception that should check extravagance. The consciousness of excellence in this particular motives anxiety to find opportunities for its use, and the actor rather inquires what the passage may be made to support, rather than what refinement and *chiaro oscuro* would suggest as the exact amount it demands. What his conception clearly dictates to be done there is no man so capable of doing.

Our own conception of *Shylock* has not been produced by Mr. Macready. We think in this character the actor has occasionally done more, and frequently done less, than necessary. Where the passage seemed sufficient for its support there was no want of vigour, often, physically, too much, mentally, never enough. We think this

arises from the actor's not having imaged to himself the character of *Shylock* as a whole. There was no current of thought evidenced on the countenance that should connect and give consistency to the words of the part. We will explain ourselves more fully. *Shylock* has an "ancient grudge" against *Antonio*, and it would be strange if he had not, rude and uncourteous as he is treated on all occasions by the merchant; but there is no reason to suppose that, however determined to be revenged when an opportunity should present itself, that any hope of such an opportunity occurring had ever presented itself to the imagination of the Jew, before the application for this loan. Then, as a consequence, the contrivance of the pound of flesh forfeiture, must have suggested itself to the mind of *Shylock* during this scene in the presence of the audience. The frequent pauses that occur, and those internal debates and the calculations on the possible failure of the ventures of *Antonio*, prove beyond a doubt that Shakspeare so intended; as—

"Yet his means are in supposition; he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third to Mexico, a fourth for England,—and other ventures he hath squandered abroad; but ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats, and water-rats, water thieves and land thieves—I mean pirates; and then, there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is—&c., &c."

What is this enumeration but a counting of the chances of loss to *Antonio* and consequent hope of influence over his fortunes to himself by becoming his creditor. This passage was treated by Mr. Macready as a single enumeration of objections to security that should enhance the interest, when it should in truth have been semi-soliloquised as presenting motives to the Jew for providing the money; and he concludes with—

"I think I may take his bond."

*Bass.* Be assured you may.

*Shy.* I will be assured, I may; and that I may be assured, I will bethink me—"

Here, again, we have the Jew cogitating, not whether it would be safe to lend the sum of three thousand ducats to a rich merchant, but how he may give the loan a chance of being subservient to his hate. He here concludes, that he may best make the terms with *Antonio* himself; for supposing he had now an incompleteness of design suggesting itself to his thought, he would reflect that terms he was thinking on might not be mooted to the dear friend of his enemy. Throughout the early part of this scene there is a hesitation and putting off, that shows the mind of the Jew to be occupied by something that he does not choose to express in words.

When left to himself, the possibility of revenge has taken possession of his soul, and he lashes himself to fury by enumerating the solid injury his commerce has sustained from the practices of the merchant—

"If I can catch him once upon the hip,

I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him."

And what follows? Mark the gradual development of the dream of retribution in which his fancy is indulging. He still continues silent, until interrupted by *Bassanio*.

*Bass.* *Shylock*, do you hear?

*Shy.* I am debating of my present store:

And, by the near guess of my memory,

I cannot instantly make up the gross

Of full three thousand ducats: What of that?

*Tubal*—a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe—

Will furnish me.

This is clearly an occupation of the time until the thing in rumination has become ripe. He will not even seem to have perceived *Antonio* until now, although he had been referring to his appearance before.

The whole of this, in Mr. Macready's personation, presented the mere details common to lenders and borrowers since those relations existed among mankind; there was nothing that argued a foregone conclusion in any part of it.

We do not undertake to limit too nicely an

actor's choice of what and when and how on these occasions; but we think even the Jew has not made himself up to his bloody intention until he has reasoned with *Antonio* on the right laying in the possessor of getting interest for the use of money—a right not now disputed; and his story of *Laban* is produced as a scriptural justification of the practice.

Here, after *Antonio* has very illogically refused the right of property in gold and silver to be equal with that residing in ewes and lambs, and while he is remarking to *Bassanio* that

"The devil can cite scripture for his purpose,"

*Shylock* is again in a reverie, until disturbed by *Antonio*.

He has now made up his determination and considered the means. He does not now seek to persuade *Antonio*. He does not now seek to prove the justice of his own acts; but boldly reproaches the merchant for having before treated him with such contumely, and being then mean enough to ask a favour. The Jew here assumes the character of an ill-used man, and produces a list of injuries he has received, that raise his own indignation to that point that he feels not only excused, but justified in the means he has determined on for obtaining a chance of vengeance on his oppressor. This whole speech was deficient in intensity, as given by Mr. Macready; and to this point we think the part a failure, as wanting the subject thought that gives consistency and individual character to the whole. In the speech, when the terms are proposed to *Antonio*, the actor was himself, and had the audience been prepared, it would have been in noble keeping with what should have been the early portion of the scene; but the hypocrisy of the jocular manner in which the thing was proposed had not been relieved by the sufficient previous explanation of real intention in the Jew.

*Bassanio* objects to the terms, and here is a contest between him and *Antonio*. Now, we have here to object that the passage—

"Oh, Father Abraham, what these Christians are, Whose own hand-dealings teaches them to suspect The thoughts of others—"

was given too truly as an aside, it being clearly intended as an exclamation for *Bassanio* and *Antonio* to hear.

The conclusion of the scene was excellent, and the Jew retired rejoicing in the success of a design, the birth and complete construction of which we contend ought to have been produced in detail to the audience. Mr. Macready is quite sufficient to the execution of this if it had been his intention to do so.

We shall pass the scene between *Shylock*, *Jessica*, and *Launcelot*, in the second act, with an objection to the loud manner of

"What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?"

as turning into a suspicion of *Jessica* what was simply an inquiry; and refer to the fulness with which Mr. Macready identified himself with an apparent foresight of the mischief about to occur that causes *Shylock's* hesitation at leaving the house.

It is probable that the scene in the commencement of the third act is the greatest test of an actor's powers that can be found in the entire of Shaksperian tragedy. Mr. Macready began it well, so well that we risk the reproach of hypercriticism when pointing to some trifle of omission, as when told that *Antonio*

"Cannot choose but break.

*Shy.* I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him. I'm glad of it.

*Tubal.* One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shy.* Out upon her! Thou torturest me, *Tubal*."

It is clear the author intended the emphasis on the *me*, playing on the word torture. This whole scene we say is such a task upon the power of an actor, that we cannot make it a subject of criticism, that every part is not what it might be. Indeed, where so much physical exertion is necessary, it requires the perfection of training to place the actor in a position to accomplish what he has

conceived, and we suspect the nervous energy of Mr. Macready has been overtaken during his present engagement.

Want of space compels us to postpone our notice of the judgment scene till next week.

THE TRUNK-MAKER.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—This theatre has, after a short recess, recommenced its career on the same plan, and with nearly the same *materiaux* of which it was composed last season. The only change we have yet observed, is that of Mr. Rogers, vice Mr. Tilbury, and, as it seems, Miss Fortescue instead of Mrs. Seymour. The first of these changes is, no doubt, an improvement. Mr. Rogers is as careful an actor as his predecessor, having less of physical difficulty to struggle with, and is, as far as we may at present give an opinion, more truly artistic in his conceptions. We are promised an addition in the person of Mr. Lester, we believe, the travelling name of a son of Mr. James Wallack. If that gentleman resembles his father as we remember him, he will be a great acquisition to this company. A sufficient light comedian, with the exception of Charles Matthews, who is eccentric, has not been seen upon the metropolitan stage, in the memory of our youth among play-goers. This management has already produced several novelties, or rather importations, "communicated by a foreigner residing abroad;" and one, a five-act comedy, called *Look before you Leap*, written by an Englishman residing at home. We shall not occupy our pages by a detail of the attempt at plot in this play, that theme having already been exhausted before we had a "local habitation and a name," but may not pass it by without some reference to its qualities as a work of art. In the first place, it possesses that chief recommendation for the stage, indeed, that one, without which all the rest are useless—it affords occasion for first-rate acting. Let the young play-goer mark well the artistic execution of Mr. Farren's "Oddington;" and he will have in his memory some reminiscences that he may boast of to the yet unborn, when speaking of the excellence that shall have passed away. In all our dramatic experience, we have nothing to place by the side of Farren, in his peculiar line of character and the originality of conception with which he produces it. He was ably supported by Mr. Buckstone, another artist actor, always true to himself, unimitating and unimitable. Mrs. Glover had also ample opportunity for those hearty exemplifications of benevolence in sentiment, which have become to her a patent right of personation, without the necessity of appeal to the attorney-general for his sanction. Mr. Rogers had something to do that was repulsive and not in nature; he did that, however, as well as could be expected. Mr. Howe is a rising man; he has power, fair physical appliances, and indeed no natural—that is, personal obstacle to climbing to any position as an actor. The way is open before him; for he is under a direction that has always exhibited the desire for cherishing the talent it possesses, rather than that of seeking abroad for new material. We have thought the public suffered from this not unamiable peculiarity in the manager, and in some instances we think so still. It is, however, fortunate for an actor to be under such control, and it is Mr. Howe's own fault if he neglect the opportunity within his reach. The specimen he presents us in his personation of "Mr. Brandon," is by no means calculated to give us so favourable an opinion of this gentleman's capacity, or to warrant a prophecy that he will ever become an artistic actor. He was hard, loud, and bullying throughout. The character of Brandon has nothing in it to justify this execution. A man is not necessarily rude because he is honest. Let Mr. Howe give more study to the characters entrusted to him, let him inquire what they are capable of, and raise his estimate of the labour necessary for success in his profession, or he will, like many others, be a talking machine merely, and so remain to the end of the chapter. Mrs. Edwin Yarnold played the very insignificant and common-place character of "Eleanor Mortimer" with so much taste and control of execution, as to



endow it with a soul not at all indebted to the words for its vitality. Miss Julia Bennet struggled through a part that the author had so fettered in impossible vulgarity, that she was unable to redeem its offensiveness by any natural approximation to society as it is. Miss P. Horton and Miss Fortescue, Mr. Hudson and Mr. Holl, acted four non-entities, and were as empty of attraction as the parts they were to represent. Their portion of the play was eminently tedious. Even Mr. Webster, with all his attempts at fuss and bustle, was a failure. It was a character that had no consistency in the author's mind; it was inconsistently conceived, inconsistently dressed, and inconsistently acted. The manager looked too well fed, and too well dressed, for a lawyer's clerk of eighteen shillings a week. "Jack Spriggs" is too conscientious to be the villain he is represented, for he has not a good point about him; then he is too sententious and philosophical for his position and education. A lawyer's clerk may know that portion of the world with which a lawyer's clerk has contact; but what is the knowledge of people, and manners, and literary men, and family tutors, which he should, *dramatically*, be represented as cognizant. This is almost the first character in which we have seen Mr. Webster to fail, and it is one in which it would be scarce possible for any one to succeed. The late Mr. Wrench might have made it amusing, for he would have given his maxims as if he had heard them third hand from a footman: his peculiarity being that of not seeming to think of what he was saying at any time. Farren, Buckstone, and Mrs. Glover, however, did wonders for the play, and as there is no deficiency of humour when they are on the scene, and they have much to do, audiences have been less amused by productions that would claim a higher literary position, than *Look before you Leap*. Mr. Webster's personation of the "Laird of Killcranke," in the three-act comedy of *Queen Mary's Bower*, is of that character of art that would cover half a dozen failures such as "Jack Spriggs."

**FRENCH PLAYS, ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.**—This elegant little establishment, as usual, commences early in the season, when we consider the class of visitors on which it depends for support. We are promised, in addition to renewed engagements with that sterling actor Cartigni, and also of Rose Cheri and Rachel, of such attraction is the season gone by, an opportunity of renewing acquaintance with Bouffé and Frederic Lemaître, besides the veteran Perlet, so great a favorite of a former period at the Lyceum, and who is now before the public. We are not yet in a position to estimate the change that has taken place since his last visit to London, for we were at the Surrey on the night he opened in St. James's. We do not, however, hesitate to recommend play-goers to avail themselves of the opportunity of witnessing the performance of that excellent actor.

**LYCEUM THEATRE.**—As this management is about to close for a period, we shall reserve our strictures for what it may do, rather than expend them on what it has done. This theatre has afforded less satisfaction to the intelligent portion of its audience, than any other in London. We did expect better things of Mrs. Keeley.

**ADELPHI THEATRE.**—This house may be denominated the head quarters of comicality. If you would, reader, continue to be genteel and melancholy, let no persuader betray you to a toleration of this antidote to any capacity for supporting the character of a clever man by the gravity of your countenance. If you have no other dependance for your respectability, do not risk that by its exposure to the influences here in the ascendant: and above all things, if you would avoid being amused and even excited, without the possibility of producing an orthodox excuse for such a weakness of character, do not go to see the *Phantom Dancers*, or the *Willis Bride*; you must indeed be endued with a gravity that would pass for stupidity in some company, to defend yourself from giving way to intense interest and intense laughter, both susceptible of such an amount of capacity for being comfortable as would destroy your pretensions to the character of a profound philosopher for the rest of your career. For the plot,

we would recommend our reader to examine the bill, which gives the plot, and a great deal more. It may, however, be summed up as follows:—"The Willis are young maidens, who being betrothed, die before their wedding-day, and are supposed to find no rest in the tomb; for though life is fled, there is supposed to remain an insatiable love of the dance. At midnight, and in the bright moonlight, they rise in crowds, arrayed in their bridal dresses, wreathed with flowers, and sparkling with jewels; their faces, though pale, have the beauty of youth, and winning smiles play upon their lips. Woe to the young man, whose evil destiny leads him within the reach of their perfidious fascination. He is compelled to join their wild orgies, and to dance with them till, from exhaustion, he sinks down and expires." This being the legend upon which the plot is founded, our readers will suppose it to be a fairy tale; yet it is not. It is a burlesque, and yet it is not. The author, after having thrown off the trammels of dramatic propriety, and rioted in the freedom of burlesque to satiety, has found even the regulations of irregularity a restriction, and in this composition is sometimes tragic and sometimes comic, sometimes exciting to intense interest, and then awakening you to a recollection where you are, by "Bravo Rouse!" or some equally cockney classical exclamation, that you have no time to do anything, but wonder what will come next. Madame Celeste is the betrothed bride, who is on the edge of matrimony with Duke Albert, supposed by her to be of her own station, that of a peasant. On the eve of her wedding, the Duke is discovered, and the shock turns the brain of Giselle, who dies on the stage from exhaustion, after a frantic dance, or what is called in the bills, a grand scene d'action. The scene then changes, and the stage is filled with Willis, who raise the body of Giselle in a sort of gauze drapery. This scene was very beautiful, and exceedingly well managed. The next scene is the haunt of the Willis, and the tomb of Giselle. She is welcomed by the Will queen, and joins the dancers. Duke Albert then enters in mourning, Giselle appears to him, but disapproves every attempt to touch her. Her evasions are contrived with much ingenuity. The queen compels Giselle to commence the *Par d'Entrainment*, by means of which, Albert is to become their prey; but she continually contrives to renovate his strength, by contact with the cross at the head of her tomb, until daylight breaks the spell, and the dancers sink into the earth. After this, we somehow find the whole of the characters assisting at a masked ball, in Willis's rooms! We do not know how this happened, but so it was. Now, when we add to this, that Wright was another lover of Giselle, that was unfortunate throughout; got himself bitten by a tarantella, and became himself a Will; and that O'Smith played the—What's his name? That Duke Albert spoke the dialect of a medical student, and that Madame Celeste took her words from the same dictionary, and Mr. Mitchenson, who was clerk to What's his name? jumped like one o'clock, and that the figurantes were both lovely and liberal of their loveliness, and the costumes were splendid, exquisitely chosen, and Miss Woolgar had all the vivacity she ever had, and more too; and Madame Celeste was as graceful as ever, as piquante as ever, and as intense in her pantomime as ever, and as comical in her pronunciation as ever; it may be calculated that the season of burlesque has passed. People will no longer be satisfied with worse, and they will never get another so good. There is also acting here, to the great satisfaction of the lieges, what is described as a Bozzian sketch, entitled *Mrs. Gamp's Tea and Turn Out*, Mr. Wright playing Mrs. Gamp delectably. It is not, however, a Bozzian sketch. Honesty is honesty. It is an adaptation of a French vaudeville, in which Vernet played Wright's part. It was acted at the Lyceum, and the mistakes of concoction was in preparing the tea. The adapter has substituted punch. We would recommend Mr. Munyard, in making up, to avoid being disgusting. His "Betsy Prig" was an unwholesomeness to look upon. Warts on the face are not humorous, in a dramatic sense.

**PRINCESS'S THEATRE.**—Mr. Scott, from America, has appeared here in "Sir Giles Overreach." We have not seen him, and as we do not delegate to others our town criticisms, we must postpone opinion. We doubt the prudence of choosing Sir Giles as an opening part.

**SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE.**—We have no notice this week of the revival of *Measure for Measure*. Our excuse has been assigned above.

A daily newspaper last week commenced its notice of a performance at Sadler's Wells, as follows:—"A tragedy, under the romantic title of *Isabella*, was produced here last night for the first time, and met with a favourable reception." The writer then gave a detail of the plot, and concluded with an opinion that "the piece was well written and interesting." Our readers will scarcely suspect that *Isabella*, or the *Fatal Marriage*, had been selected by the critic, as a theme on which to exhibit his profound ignorance of the thing of which he would assume the direction. This might was the less excusable, in that *Isabella* had been several times acted during the last season by Mrs. Warner. We beg to state, for the information of those whom it may concern, that the said play was written by Thomas Southerne, and produced under the title of the *Fatal Marriage*, or the *Innocent Adultery*, as far back as 1694, in which year it was printed. It was then altered by Garrick, and played at Drury Lane, in 1758, as *Isabella*, or the *Fatal Marriage*, and Mrs. Siddons made her appearance in the same play, at Drury Lane, October 20th, 1782. Those who write critiques ought to possess some historical knowledge of the drama.

**OLYMPIC THEATRE.**—This establishment is revolutionizing, as it were, at present. The season has come to an early conclusion, we believe, to get rid of some heavy engagements. We cannot uphold the honesty of these means, by which a manager may "tear the bond" without a notice, while the actor is always bound. It is doubtless a strong presumption of inefficiency in a management. However, we suppose it is understood, if not "expressed in the condition."

#### THE DRAMA OUT OF TOWN.

It must not be imagined that the metropolis is the Drama's only home.—No:—in the provinces it has a "social habitation," and, in many instances, is much followed, encouraged, and appreciated. London may give the "hall mark"—the stamp of approbation—but the article is the production of the country, possessing all the *real* value before it reaches town. The country may be—no doubt it is—the nursery for the London theatres; but there are professionals out of town—aye, talented ones too—who care but little for a town engagement. This is a matter for little wonder at the present period: for in town there are but few persons of histrionic merit could hope to establish themselves in the legitimate drama:—while out of town—Dublin, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, &c., can boast of large and commodious theatres, possessing excellent companies, and directed by spirited managers, and where pieces are produced nothing inferior to many a London establishment. In such places the members of the profession not only find a home, but friends who liberally patronise them. There are even places of less note where the drama is admired and supported, while there are also towns, large, populous, and wealthy, where the drama is neglected; but where the people flock in crowds to patronise any strange monstrosity. Then, since there are well conducted theatres, and ladies and gentlemen of undoubted talent in the provinces, surely the "Drama out of Town" is worthy of a notice; and with that impression, it is our intention, from time to time, faithfully to record passing events: as the opening and closing of country theatres, the movements of stars, and "though last not least," take some note of the capabilities of those who aspire to the leading cast of characters, in the various departments of the drama.

There are theatrical establishments in the provinces, that seem constructed upon the supposition that an *individual*, not the drama, is the object to be supported, and in which everything is treated

as an accessory to the glorification of either the manager's self or that of some relative. We have before us a bill of the Bury St. Edmund's Theatre, and we observe that the name of the manager's daughter is printed in letters some six times larger than those of any other person in the company. If the manager means to hint by this, that he has no other actor worth notice, it is at least candid on his part, and the public should not hesitate to take his estimate of the fare he has provided; but as few plays are written entirely for a single female actor, the conclusion we must come to is, that either talent is treated with neglect on the Norwich circuit, or that a tolerably acted play as a whole, is a matter without the scope of the manager's intention. In saying this we do but take the estimate furnished by himself.

The Theatre Royal, Manchester, eschews this sacrifice to individualities, and rests its claim for public support on the general excellence of its company: there pieces are put on the stage with attention to scenery, dresses, and appliances, while the science of bill-making is but secondary to the determination to deserve well. The starring system is avoided, and the management relies upon the *tout ensemble* for success.

The Queen's Theatre, Manchester, is also conducted with spirit and skill, but on another principle, the starring system being the great feature of the management. It is also successful.

ABERDEEN.—The dramatic season commenced on the 5th inst. with a well selected company. Mr. James Bennet, Mr. Dyas, and Mr. C. Hale, being the principals in their respective departments. It would be well for the profession if more provincial theatres were under a similar management to this. A body of gentlemen connected with the town—one of themselves filling the situation of acting manager and treasurer. An experienced professional being appointed stage manager and director. This is the second season, and to judge from the past, the experiment will prove highly successful, and reflect credit on those who have so liberally espoused the drama's cause. The advantages to be derived from such a system of management will be, that a greater interest must be felt for the fate of the theatre. The ladies and gentlemen of the company will be more carefully selected, and talent better paid; while the pieces represented will be of more sterling worth, and well put on the stage. We shall watch the proceedings, and record its success with much pleasure.

BARNSTABLE THEATRE (Lessee, C. D. Davis).—This theatre approaches the conclusion of a short but prosperous season. Mr. Davis, like Mr. Webster, of the Haymarket, does not think that being manager gives that universal capacity that should fit him to be first rate in every thing, and we do not see his name larger in his bills than those of any other in the company. He has also the good sense to eschew the burlesque mania. The season finishes with the ensuing week, and Mr. Davis, and the principal among the actors, remove to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The first business in tragedy and comedy has been ably supported by Miss O'Hara, a young lady remarkable for intense power and great vivacity, that cannot long be a stranger to the metropolis. Her sister, Miss Helen O'Hara, possesses a fund of archness in the *soubrette*, with a rich soprano voice. Miss Stevens has also a fine voice, and we may remark the same quality in Miss Murray. Mr. James Johnson shares the first rate business with the manager, and is a sound actor. Mr. Edgar, the genteel comedian, has an elegant figure, always looks well upon the stage, and, with a little management of voice, which he is certain to acquire, would be an acquisition to any theatre. Mr. Corrie is an excellent low comedian, short, stout, and eccentric, that "speaks no more than is set down for him." These, we believe, all go to Newcastle, and we shall not neglect noticing their reception on their change of audience.

THEATRE ROYAL, DUMFRIES (W. E. Mills, Manager).—It is said that the celebrated Edmund Kean was at one time property-man here, and lighted the lamps in front of the theatre. Mr. Henderson is the leading stock actor here, and is

deservedly a favourite. Mr. and Mrs. Mills are of the right sort for managers, playing anything according to circumstances. A theatre so directed cannot choose but thrive. Mr. Armstrong is the genteel comedian. The low comedian is Mr. William Wright, who bids fair to rival his namesake at the Adelphi, whose entire line of character he includes with a host of others, not excepting that of clown in pantomimes of his own production. Miss Goddard is leading lady, as yet but young in the profession, but dresses well, and is painstaking, and Mrs. Armstrong is a most useful actress. The scene painter is Mr. W. J. Meadows, son of Mr. Meadows, of the Surrey; and Mr. Rogers, an artist who will make himself a reputation, is leader and composer. This company is a good sample of what may be done by efficient management, based upon consideration of what is due to an audience. Mr. James Bennet has been starring here last week with success; he played *Othello*, *Hamlet*, twice, *Stranger*, *Julian St. Pierre*, *Richelieu*, and *Claude Melnotte*. Mr. Paumier has succeeded him, and is playing *Duñ Aranza*, *Don Cesar de Bazan*, *Claude Melnotte*, *Lord Darney*, *Petruchio*, and *William*, in *Black Eyed Susan*. Mr. Mackay, the celebrated representative of Highlanders, succeeds Mr. Paumier, when he takes final leave of the stage.

SOUTHAMPTON.—Notwithstanding the formidable opposition of an equestrian troop, which is at all times much followed, even by those who, from religious scruples, would not see a play (but horsemanship comes under the denomination of "art and science") the theatre is well attended. The manager, W. Parker, has hit the taste of the town—simply by procuring a highly respectable company, and the producing of pieces with attention to their general paraphernalia. Miss Stuart, is the leading lady, and possesses considerable promise, yet there is much to learn, which may be obtained by study and attention. Mr. J. Wood is a low comedian of no common merit; he is a great favourite, and we predict ere long he will be the same in London.

NOTTINGHAM.—The winter campaign has fairly set in, and the commander (manager, J. F. Saville) has matured his plans of operation for carrying on the war. The corps-dramatique is more numerous, and better disciplined than it was last year, and the works (pieces produced) are judiciously selected, and brought forward with much skill. We are happy to find that Walter Shelly has gone boldly into the ranks, doing regular duty, instead of only occasionally appearing in pet-parts. To become great, a thorough knowledge must practically be obtained; the best actors, *were, are, and will be* those who have gone through the drudgery of the profession. We are, to, pleased to find that Mr. Saville is doing well.

GLASGOW.—The 11th of the present month is named by the great Alexander for the opening of the Theatre Royal, Dunlop-street, a theatre, whose internal arrangements, scenery, machinery, dresses, decorations, and properties, are inferior to none in the kingdom. Of the company engaged, as they have not yet developed their respective capabilities, we are not able to speak. Hereafter we shall notice their various qualities as connected with the histrionic art. Alexander, although exceedingly eccentric, is neither a bad manager, or indifferent actor, but he must not again attempt *Romeo and Doricourt*, even though Mr. Davenport is the *Mercutio* and *Flutter*!!!

THE ADELPHI THEATRE, with large bill and low prices, is doing moderately well; but the company—and there is talent in it—lacks discretion. There is a crudeness in all they do, as if they only played to please that portion of the audience who delight in loud shouting, extravagant action, and unnatural incidents. It is a fault. We shall be happy to hear of its amendment.

BRIGHTON.—This dramatic hemisphere for stars has just been visited by those attractive meteors, Madame Vestris and Charles Matthews, who never appear in the theatre but it is crowded with admiring gazers. Indeed, the play-goers of Brighton will not be amused by a regular theatrical company, however talented it may be. There must be a somebody, or a something bla-

zoned forth, on the top of the bills, to draw them out; and, therefore, is the poor manager often compelled to engage monstrosities against his better judgment, and make stars of those whom, at other times, he would scarcely think good enough for stock actors.

SHEFFIELD.—Under the management of Mr. C. Dillon, the theatre is decidedly prospering. Mrs. Pollock is a leading actress, possessing much stage knowledge and judgment, but appears to want power. There is not solidity enough about Mrs. C. Dillon for the characters she assumes—in less important parts, she would appear to more advantage. Miss Norman does justice to the *soubrettes*, and sings with taste. Mr. C. Dillon is an excellent melo-dramatic actor, but is very deficient in the higher walks of tragedy, especially coming after G. V. Brooke. Elphinstone has talent, and, with care, he may stand well in the profession; and the low comedy of H. Widdicombe is much admired.

BATH AND BRISTOL.—The summer, or autumnal season, has terminated, Mrs. Fitzwilliam playing there on Monday last (the last night), for the benefit of Mr. Angell—the Liston of the establishments, upon which occasion the theatre was numerously attended. Mrs. Macready, with her company, have shifted their quarters to *Cardiff*, where they have commenced operations, Mrs. Fitzwilliam being engaged for the remainder of the week.

NEWMARKET.—Mr. Charles Gill will commence his second season of management on Monday next. Mrs. C. Gill—late of the Surrey—is the heroine; while Mr. G. Vining, son of James Vining, will sustain the opposite leading characters. Mr. Gill, is himself, a low comedian of much merit, in which department, he will be assisted by Mr. Attwood. With the other members of the company we are strangers; but, judging from the manager's desire to please, we doubt not but they are fully competent to their respective lines.

DUBLIN TESTIMONIAL TO MISS HELEN FAUCIT.—On Friday, the 23rd ultimo, a deputation of the subscribers presented Miss Helen Faucit with a brooch of native Irish gold, of three inches diameter, having in the centre the figure of Antigone, bending over the arm of Polynices, set in a concave disc of white enamel, inscribed with the word "Antigone," in ancient Greek characters. On either side of this medallion are the tragic masks of Antigone and Creon, entwined within the coils of the Cadmean serpent, and surrounded by a concave fillet, in which are set three large emeralds of the finest water; the whole enclosed in a wreath of the sacred olive. Miss Faucit expressed her extreme gratification at the beauty of the ornament, and returned thanks for what she considered the proudest memorial of her professional career.

## MUSIC.

### MADAME BISHOP.

ALTHOUGH some time has now elapsed since the appearance of this singer on the Drury Lane boards, yet it may be granted to us to say a few words of one who has been so variously spoken of by the press. Our cotemporaries have also been somewhat diffuse in their accounts of the birth, parentage, and education; there will, therefore, be no necessity for us to enter into these details. All we have to say of her is as a prima donna of an English Opera Company.

Madame Bishop possesses a voice of a feint soprano quality—the lower part very weak, but with some extension in the upper notes; indeed, the compass available does not reach two octaves, which is less than the generality possess. The voice throughout is so weak as to have somewhat of an infantine quality, not naturally, but rendered so by long-continued practice in an artificial manner, at times giving almost the painful idea of not being able to continue her exertions. Under these circumstances, we are surprised that her intonation should be so correct, for such it certainly is, and her execution is very perfect; with these latter qualifications, which must be entirely



owing to her own perseverance in practice, she ought to hold a very high place among the singers of the day, but unfortunately the mere mechanical exhibition of vocalization can never command complete success; as long as her voice last she will always succeed to a certain extent, but not to that which her personal exertions deserve. One drawback, however, is, that she does not articulate—it is impossible to hear what she is attempting to say—she merely vocalises the passages. This is the consequence of having reduced her vocal power to the mechanism of execution, which always must impede the utterance of the words, for, unless the voice is produced without effort, simply by the proper management of the breath, such must always be the case. In acting, Madame Bishop deserves the credit of being very well versed in all the usual stage means and appliances. At times only she appears to feel her subject, but does not show any great amount of expressive power. When speaking, she labours under the same weakness of voice we have noticed in her singing. On the whole, then, we do not think Madame Bishop's success on the stage very decided; in a concert-room, she may yet vocalise for some time, but all her efforts in a grand opera will never produce an entirety of satisfaction in an audience.

Our attention has been arrested by some of the notices of this singer, that have appeared in the papers; we shall, however, only notice the remarks of the oracle of the *Times*, who has, as he imagines, gone very deep into vocal matters, but who has in reality contrived only to flounder most prodigiously on the surface. We will take the trouble of following the writer through this obfuscation caused by his own spray:—"Madame Bishop's is one of those voices rare now-a-days, which, in Italy, are known as the soprano sfogato; it is of that delicately-veiled quality of which Rossini has expressed himself so ardent an admirer." The term sfogato is misapplied; in speaking of the voice it means soprano, which Madame Bishop's certainly is not; the veiled quality has been caused by practising on false principles, so that all power of vibration has been lost. Now Rossini, knowing something more about the matter than this writer, can hardly be supposed to have admired so palpable a defect:—"Its regular compass is from F, on the first space to E flat, on the third line above the staff; all good notes on which she can depend, but when occasion requires, she can sing both lower and higher than the extremes indicated." This is said as if it was something uncommon, the fact is, every soprano, if properly cultivated, ought to go from the E flat, or even natural, down not only to the F, but four notes lower to the C, on the first ledger line; so that if Madame Bishop can go lower than F, it is no more than is required from every singer, and if she can go higher than the E, which we very much doubt, we should be sorry to hear it. "It is, in all respects, a pure and undeniable soprano, such a voice as Handel wrote for in the Messiah, and the Italians from Cimarosa to Rossini, in most of their noted operas." Purity of tone can never co-exist with a veiled quality; so far, then, the writer very delicately contradicts what he has advanced on his first sentence. "The most celebrated professors of the soprano sfogato voice, whose names will now be recognised, are Rowzi, Sontag, Grisi, and Persiani." How any one with ears could think of placing Grisi in the same category with the other three, seems inconceivable; the three are soprano, but Grisi's voice is a pure mezzo soprano, a quality perfectly distinct, being much fuller in tone, and with such power as to render it the most available for producing dramatic effect. "Though, by-the-way, Grisi is only a pure soprano in the middle voice, the upper and lower notes appertaining to the mezzo soprano, of which there are so many existing specimens among our own English vocalists." To show the utter nonsense contained in this sentence, it becomes necessary to explain the terms—soprano, means high; mezzo soprano, middle high—that is, not so high—we simply ask, how can a voice be high in the middle part, and not so high in the higher and lower parts? Showing such profound ignorance of

the subject, it is clear the writer cannot distinguish one quality of voice from another, and therefore can know nothing of the existing specimens among our own English vocalists. "For the purposes of dramatic singing, the best notes of Madame Bishop's voice are from B flat on the staff to C above." This is all very well as far as it goes, but amounts to no more than this, that the best features of a woman's face are in her face, for, it is clear, they would not be anywhere else. "It would be a great boon to operatic music, legitimately so called, if the pure soprano were more abundant." It would be a still greater, if the pure mezzo soprano were, the soprano is not at all adapted for any other than operas of mezzo carattere, being generally deficient in power, and incapable of sustaining sounds; the reason why Handel and the Italians from Cimarosa to Rossini, wrote for them is, that they are more abundant than any other quality, a fact at variance with the assertion made. "The true harmonizing voices are decidedly the soprano, the tenor, the barytone (low tenor), and the bass, the introduction of the mezzo soprano interferes with the tenor and spoils the ensemble." In opposition to this, we need only assert, that real vocal harmony is made by the soprano, or mezzo soprano, the contralto, the tenor, the barytone, and bass, and these are the voices for which almost every chorus that has been written, is written. The barytone is not a low tenor, but as its name implies, deep tone for *l'opus*, means deep, which can never be said of any tenor whatever. "The ordinary sopranos of the present day, can only reach the high notes by forcing the voice, which produces that screaming quality so destructive to melody and harmony." This, again, is contrary to fact, for the sopranos are the voices that take the upper notes easier than any other quality, and, indeed, the upper notes are the only notes they have with any power. As Madame Bishop's testifies, and the screaming quality, which is certainly caused by forcing the voice, may destroy harmony, but not melody. "Not so with the true soprano, and not so with Madame Bishop's, which is one of the purest now existing." Here again is an assertion. Madame Bishop can only reach the upper notes by forcing; and, as we have before observed, it cannot be a pure voice, with the veiled quality, which the writer rightly says it possesses:—"Her aim in study has evidently been to unite to dramatic effect that purity of method, and that attention to the management of the breath, which the majority of singers are apt to neglect, except in the cavatina." How singers can neglect the management of the breath, if they ever knew it, everywhere except in a cavatina, is inconceivable; the more the management of the breath is understood, the easier it is to sing, so that, according to this writer, a singer takes more trouble to do a thing badly than to do it well—a position totally inexplicable. A singer who understands the art, uses his breath to the best advantage at all times—in fact, he must; if he deviates at all, he in so much loses his power, and will, in all probability, acquire such habits as may ultimately ruin the voice altogether. Dramatic effect is an effect; therefore, its union with what may in some degree be considered its cause, is clearly impossible. To prevent accidents of this kind, the writer had better turn to his accidence, "as in the case of every soprano sfogato the chest notes are less resonant than the higher ones, in passages where great dramatic energy is demanded; but in the ballad style Madame Bishop can sing as low as D beneath the staff with facility and good effect." We cannot blame the writer for using the term "chest notes," as it has become general. The sounds of the voice are all made at a point in the larynx, called the rima, the difference of pitch is caused by the rising and falling of the larynx and trachea in the throat—the chest, or rather the lungs, being the bellows. But it is contrary to fact, that the lower notes resound less than the higher; for this simple reason, the resonance depends on the space. Now, the lower notes, from the position of the trachea being lower in the throat, have necessarily a larger space to vibrate in, and consequently a greater resonance.—Q. E. D. "Before she went on the continent, Madame

Bishop's voice was mistaken for a mezzo soprano, and F or G was the highest note she attempted; but at Naples, where the popular composer Mercadante wrote an air with variations for her, which more than once touched upon E in alt., she found she executed with ease, and thence the true nature of her voice was declared." Madame Bishop's voice could only be mistaken by those who knew nothing about the matter. As to confining herself to F or G, there is scarcely a scena for a soprano or mezzo soprano, that does not require a higher compass. Of course, Mercadante, knew perfectly well what he was about, when he wrote to E in alt. for a soprano; but as to the true nature of the voice being declared in consequence, is a *non sequitur*—the reverse is the fact. Nature herself declares the voice, and a person may just as well attempt to add an inch to the stature as to alter the natural quality. We have thus waded through this heap of words—a task we certainly should not have undertaken, had it appeared in any other paper but the *Times*. If such is a specimen of the musical knowledge with which the public is to be favoured, we pity the readers.

The next paragraph on Madame Bishop's performance might be equally made the subject of running comment, but for this once we have said enough.—C. J.

Balfe has arrived in town from Vienna.

Benedict is now in Paris, and will be in London next week.

Mademoiselle Corbari sung in Paris with great success the part of *Adalgisa* in *Norma*. We understand that she is to be added to the brilliant catalogue of the Italian Opera Company, Covent-Garden.

The narrow escape Sivioli had from shipwreck, in the *Great Western*, caused him a severe illness, which obliged him to forego his first engagement in the United States; but he has since played before the American public, and has met with immense success.

Want of space compels us to omit several interesting reviews on musical matters.

THE ART-UNION JOURNAL AND H. B. CHALON.—We sometimes look into the *Art Union Magazine*, not for its notions on art, which are usually restricted to what is most advantageous for bell-hangers, but to look at the woodcuts with which it is furnished, by those who advertise in its pages. We were this month, however, attracted by a paragraph headed *Mr. H. B. Chalon*. The public is here informed, that the *we* of the publication, had used expressions to direct sympathy towards the case of that artist. That "his references to several brother artists, of high professional standing and unimpeachable reputations, confirmed our belief that we did what was right in urging strongly his claims for assistance in his distress. Acting under this feeling, we drew up for him a memorial to the Royal Academy, and inserted in our journal the paragraph which, no doubt, many of our readers will call to mind. We owe it to our readers to state our deep regret that we have been deceived; we deplore the imperative task to which we are compelled; but it is one on which we dare not shrink; that *Mr. Chalon is aged, sick, and in poverty, is too certain*; and if he had permitted us to say so much, and no more, we should neither have been misleaden, nor mislead; but he *suffered us* to state that "*he had ever been without reproach*," that "*he had discharged all the duties of life with credit and respectability*," and that *his misfortunes had resulted from no indiscretion or evil habits*;" he suffered us to state this knowing it to be untrue, and knowing also that we firmly believed it to be the truth; and he has, therefore, forced upon us the grievous and sadly-irksome duty of now saying the contrary is the fact." This is written in cold blood with reference to an artist, aged, sick, and in extreme need. This Pharasee, who would, by implication, assert that it is for man to judge of his brother atom, and to condemn him pitilessly in his old age for faults which his judge does not choose to enumerate to those he would make the instruments of the

punishment he would inflict. We know nothing of H. B. Chalon, but that he was a painter of animals, and, from the mere information conveyed by the paragraph referred to, are not sure but that his whole imputed sin is that of not attending the same conventicle with the writer. To say that "a man has not discharged *all* the duties of life *without reproach*, is to say the man happens to be a mortal like the rest of us." Will the editor of the *Art-Union* point us out the man who can lay his hand upon his heart and say he has? Let not such a man be trusted! The indignation of the writer, that his assertion of the reverse was an untruth, into which he was beguiled by the representation of the unfortunate artist, is of that *Pecksniffian* character of appeal to the sensibilities, that *Pecksniff* himself could only have written after dining out. Pray is this assumed to be the only misrepresentation of a fact ever promulgated in the *Art-Union* journal???

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